



P&C Federation Awards Dinner

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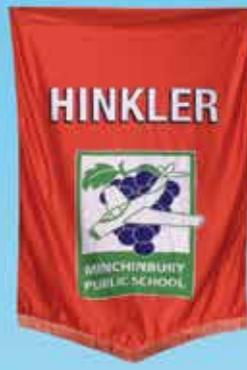
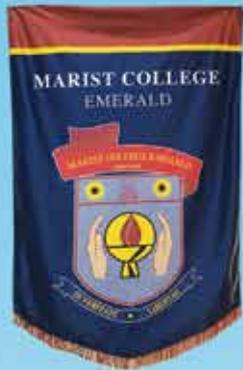
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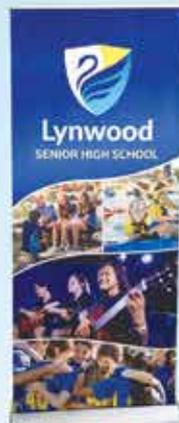


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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Tim Spencer

I write this in the midst of an unprecedented crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many P&C Associations have been severely disrupted due to uncertainty about how to hold meetings, being forced to cancel fundraising events, being unable to operate canteens or other facilities or having to abruptly stand down paid staff. We are working hard to help P&C Associations navigate through what is uncharted territory. Most importantly, we are working as hard as we can to ensure that this crisis will not jeopardise our children's education. As unnerving as things may seem, the world has gone through far worse crises than this, and I have no doubt we will all pick ourselves up again in due course.

Despite the pandemic, business must go on. Earlier this year, we presented at the Principal Induction session, with around 135 new Principals in attendance. Our focus was to convey key information and dispel myths around the role of the P&C Association and the Principal. The workshops allowed for face to face conversations with Principals and we thank the Department of Education for the opportunity to present.

In February, we hosted the 2019 NSW P&C Volunteer of the Year Award ceremony, which celebrates P&C volunteers who have given outstanding support to their schools. I congratulate Ingrid Waite of Castle Hill High School for winning the Award, as well as all the finalists for their exceptional dedication and efforts.



I would like to remind everyone that P&C Federation's Annual General Meeting is in August. As the single largest parent organisation in the Southern Hemisphere, P&C Federation carries a lot of influence, and this meeting is where we shape our activities for the next twelve months and beyond. All our member Associations can have a say in this process by sending us their motions to discuss and possibly adopt. If you have any motions for the AGM make sure you get them to us by 12 June.

In in-house news, P&C Federation's General Manager Steve Carpenter has retired, and I am happy to announce that we have

There is a major review of the NSW curriculum underway. This is a significant undertaking and presents a substantial opportunity to make a positive and lasting investment in our children and our country's future.

appointed Hannah Pia Baral as the new General Manager. She has a wealth of experience in the charities and not-for-profits sector and will be a superb standard bearer for our organisation. We would like to thank Steve for his many years of dedication and service to P&C Federation and wish him all the best in his retirement.

In terms of public education, there are a host of important matters on the horizon. After the failure of the Federal Government to address the concerns surrounding NAPLAN, the NSW Government decided to conduct its own NAPLAN review in conjunction with Queensland and the ACT. We have long been



P&C Federation President,
Tim Spencer

critical of how the current NAPLAN system has fostered a league table culture that rewards teaching to the test and detracts from authentic education. We are contributing to this review despite the cancellation of NAPLAN for 2020, and we hope it will lead to a testing regime that actually informs teaching and learning.

There is also a major review of the NSW curriculum underway. This is a significant undertaking and presents a substantial opportunity to make a positive and lasting investment in our children and our country's future. Although we anticipate a substantial delay in the report being released due to the current crisis, we call on the NSW Government to give serious consideration to the contents of the final report and the potential long-term benefits of adopting the changes. There is no doubt that what is being proposed will require significant investment and we hope that the NSW Government does not shy away from very strong support for change. Parents and other stakeholders will take a very dim view to superficial or quick fixes such as arbitrary reductions in syllabus content, an increase in compliance for teachers or a simplistic "back to basics" push that will do little to address what is actually needed.

Stay safe and healthy.

MOTION TO P&C FEDERATION'S 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

Is there something your P&C Association would like discussed at the August 2020 AGM? Start sending your submissions to agm@pandc.org.au now so we can include it in the AGM agenda.

What is a motion?

A motion sets out a policy or an action that:

- Your P&C Association wants to be carried out, or
- Course of action your P&C Association wants P&C Federation to perform.

Who can submit a motion?

- Any P&C Association that is a current member of the P&C Federation, or
- Any non-member under sponsorship from a P&C Federation Board member

Motion content:

Something your P&C Association wants done, by whom and when it should be done by.

How to write a motion:

An example of a motion could be...

"That P&C Federation write to the Minister for Transport advocating for the provision of additional 'Kiss and Drop Zones' for primary schools in such and such area".

Submitting an AGM motion:

All motions are to be sent to agm@pandc.org.au by no later than 5:00PM, Friday 12 June 2020.



For more information on how to write a motion please refer to the website www.pandc.org.au/pc-federation-annual-general-meeting/.

If you have any questions about the AGM, please feel free to contact our office on **1300 885 982**.

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SCHOOLS ARE SAFE ANCHORS FOR BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

By Mark Scott

It's no exaggeration to say that the return to school in 2020 was the most harrowing in recent memory.

Bushfires on an unprecedented scale have caused widespread destruction and traumatised communities across NSW since last July. And then in January and February came the dust storms, the hail storms, the coronavirus (COVID-19) and floods.

For many communities the bushfire recovery is just beginning but our principals, teachers and support staff have been remarkable in providing a safe anchor – and routine – for students' learning in these times of trauma.

A pressing priority for many schools is to deal with the trauma evident across so many communities after the horrific experience of being caught in fires and the devastating loss that followed.

The stories of survival I've heard from schools on the NSW south and north coast are incredible. Children, parents and school staff experienced moments of genuine terror as the fires descended. Nearly two dozen children at one small primary school I visited lost their homes (as well as the local school education director who was accompanying me).

We had staff and student volunteers working tirelessly with the Rural Fire Service for many months. Our schools were used as evacuation points – with stranded residents welcomed in as well as cats, dogs, chickens and even horses. Many residents are now living in temporary accommodation and there is a

widespread feeling of displacement.

In northern NSW we lost two schools in November – Wyalaliba Public School and Bobin Public School – but thanks to the efforts of our staff and tradespeople both schools were reconstructed in time for the start of Term 1, 2020. The recovery work in our schools – estimated at \$20 million – saw our staff working around the clock to repair and clean 178 schools in bushfire-affected communities by the end of January.

Our schools are the cornerstones of their communities and will play an important role in the recovery from these fires. School brings normality to the lives of children and young people and it's where their friends are.

But the impact of trauma does not wash away as the media circus moves on and we can expect a lingering impact on the communities affected. The experience out of the Victorian bushfires a decade ago indicates the need for continuing investment of skilled counsellors and a range of ongoing support. In NSW, with government support, we have focused on ensuring appropriate mental health support is available at every affected school for both students and staff.

We are ramping up our efforts to provide personalised support and assistance to our affected school communities. I've been reminded on my school visits that as an organisation we must understand that communities are still coming to terms with what has happened and grappling with longer term rebuild and recovery. We must be



Mark Scott, Secretary
NSW Department of Education

committed to do everything we can to help.

We have established a bushfire relief strategy leader to work across our organisation, the profession and government to coordinate, problem-solve, make decisions, connect with our people on the ground and challenge us all to ensure our recovery efforts are maximised for our school communities.

Our teachers and support staff in schools – and our corporate staff supporting school staff – have a vital role in helping students come to terms with their experiences, to develop the strength and resilience they will need on an ongoing basis, and to keep them learning and growing and preparing for rich and fulfilling lives.

Critically, we need to ensure there is support for our staff who live in these communities and were in the midst of the disaster. As they look to support others, we need to make sure they have the best care and support, too.

There will be challenges for teachers in helping young people find hope in a world that presents such demanding challenges – and at times such a bleak picture of the future. We can all be proud of the passion and determination of young people to make a difference, to change the world and to challenge the status quo.

It's our responsibility as educators to help young people find a way to recover, grow and learn so they have the strength to shape a better future for the generation to come.



An aerial view of Bobin Public School, reconstructed in time for the start of the school year after it was destroyed by fire in November 2019

NESA NEWS

By Paul Martin

The year is well and truly underway. As both the Chief Executive Officer of the NSW Education Standards Authority and a parent I believe now is a very exciting time for Education in NSW, of course, this changing landscape brings with it challenges.

The year is well and truly underway. As both the Chief Executive Officer of the NSW Education Standards Authority and a parent I believe now is a very exciting time for Education in NSW, of course, this changing landscape brings with it challenges.

Some of you provided your feedback to the NSW Curriculum Review, as partners in the education process and for that I thank you.

The changes proposed by the Review are significant. The engagement of parents, alongside feedback and consultation from schools, teachers and stakeholders in education will ensure that our children continue to be best prepared for life after school.

Collaborating with your child's teachers in primary school

While children have a range of needs, some children require particular adjustments to their learning plans. Parents should always feel comfortable entering into these discussions with teachers.

Early intervention is essential in ensuring children with specific needs are well supported and able to progress in their learning.

Some children with disability will need personalised planning, involving the student, parents and carers, teachers and other significant individuals or professionals. This will include collaboratively deciding the most appropriate curriculum options and adjustments for the student.

Visit the NESA website for resources and advice on personalised planning for students.

New syllabuses

This year, there are a number of new syllabuses being taught in schools, including:

- PDHPE K-10
- K-10 Arabic, Modern Greek, Turkish and Vietnamese Years 7-10
- Years 7-8 Technology Mandatory (100 hours in Year 8)

To see all the new syllabuses that will be taught in 2020, visit the NESA website.

Moving to NAPLAN Online

Since 2018 schools across Australia have been moving from paper to online tests. It is important that we confirm the robustness of the technology that delivers the online test, as well as arrangements for troubleshooting and communication prior to the test in May 2020. For more information, visit the NESA website: <https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/naplan>

Preparing students for life after school

We know that we want our children to leave school equipped with the basics to succeed in life – and that includes the fundamental skills in reading, writing and numeracy.

As you are by now well aware, this year students are required to meet a minimum standard of literacy and numeracy to receive their Higher School Certificate.

To show they meet the standard, students need to achieve Level 3 or 4 in short online reading, writing and numeracy tests of skills for everyday life.

The tests can be taken from Year 10 until up to five years after starting their first HSC course.

Students have up to four times per year to sit each minimum standard test.

Students sitting the HSC in 2020 only also had the opportunity to meet the standard by achieving Band 8 or above in reading, writing and numeracy in their Year 9 NAPLAN tests.

Take a look at the NESA website for more resources including practice tests: educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/HSCminimumstandard



Paul Martin, CEO
NSW Education Standards Authority

What's in store for the 2020 HSC

The 2020 HSC is officially here, with personalised HSC written exam timetables soon available via your child's Students Online account.

The HSC Languages oral exam schedule is already available on the NESA website

The much anticipated Sydney Morning Herald Study Guide will be released in June. This essential study guide provides important exam information, stress management tips and advice from exemplary students.

As always, the NESA website is also full of useful resources for students preparing for assessments and exams. Marking feedback is an invaluable resource for students looking to understand which responses worked and which didn't:

- past exam papers with marking feedback
- HSC exam workbooks available in the NESA Shop
- Key words and terms used in exams

Take a look at the NESA student guide with your child one weekend, to see what they are facing: <https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/hsc/hsc-student-guide>



P&C FEDERATION'S AWARDS DINNER

L'Aqua's gold room at Cockle Bay, Sydney was the location for P&C Federation to host their awards dinner on Friday 28th February 2020.

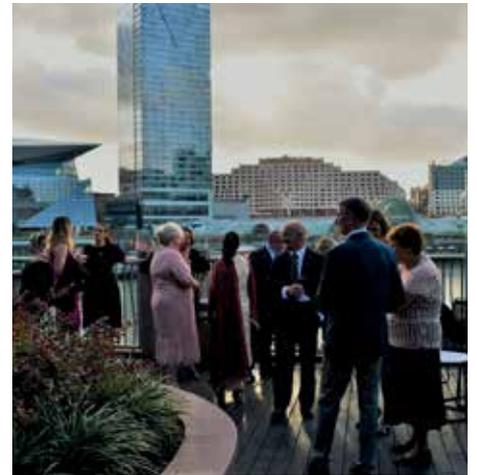
And what a venue! Celebrating and acknowledging the wonderful P&C Association volunteers that were chosen as finalists from across NSW for the title of NSW P&C Volunteer of the Year 2019.

Tim Spencer, P&C Federation's newly elected President, opened the evening welcoming the 14 guests of honour the finalists, their family, friends and/or P&C Association representatives, who accompanied them to help celebrate this special evening.

A warm welcome was also extended to the special guests for the evening. Our first special guests were our platinum sponsors from the Commonwealth Bank, Mr. James Corbett, General Manager of Customer Service Strategy and Operations and Ms. Veronica Howarth, Head of School Banking. We also had the privilege of having representatives from the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC), who travelled from Melbourne, Ms. Anna Longley, Assistant Commissioner - General Counsel and Ms. Joanna Austin, Director, Legal. Tim Spencer also took the opportunity to acknowledge Hicksons Lawyers, Andrews Insurance, SchoolBanners, and AdvancedLife Photography for their continued support to P&C Federation with the awards dinner and throughout the year.

Ms. Anna Longley spoke about the history of ACNC and how it came to be when the Australian Tax Office split due to the large amount of charities and not for profits, making ACNC the national regulator of charities. Anna explained how this relates to P&C Associations and what compliance as a registered charity or not for profit means and the benefits, as well as the possible consequences, for non-compliance.

Mr. Warwick Ryan, from Hicksons Lawyers, gave an entertaining presentation about the Enterprise Agreements that he has been working on with two P&C Associations which



have been successfully approved by FairWork. Warwick also informed P&C Associations, who have 2 or more employees, how this could be a positive option for them and their employees.

The last speaker for the evening before the presentation of the awards, was Ms. Debbie Clifford, Projects Officer at P&C Federation. Debbie announced the exciting news of an online learning platform for members that is being developed; with the first two courses expected to be launched shortly. This announcement caused quite a buzz around the room, with guests expressing how fantastic it will be to have this resource. P&C Federation advises you check your P&C Association has completed a member register update with your current Office Bearers details, so your P&C Association doesn't miss out on the details for the launch.



NSW P&C VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR 2019 FINALISTS

It was P&C Federation's third year hosting an awards dinner, which acknowledges volunteers who give so much of themselves to support and contribute to their school community and the students at their school community and its students.

Three independent judges were engaged to carry out the difficult job of sifting through the nominations received from 14 of the 16 electorates across NSW and they spent considerable time deliberating over the many nominations. It was no easy feat for the judges in choosing a finalist from each electorate, before then taking further time before coming to the decision of the overall title winner.

No nominations came from the Far West Electorate and Riverina Electorates. We look forward to this changing for the NSW P&C Volunteer of the Year 2020.

P&C Federation would like to again congratulate each of the electorate finalists.



Ingrid Waite - North West Sydney Electorate, Castle Hill High School



Belinda Gethin - North Sydney Electorate, Ermington Public School



Carmen Shoemark - Hunter Electorate, Mt Pleasant Public School



Debbie Gosling - West Sydney Electorate, Leonay Public School



Debbie Ritchie - Central Coast Electorate, Brisbane Water Secondary College



Estelle Crabb - North Coast Electorate, Bogangar Public School



Bill Lewis - Southern Sydney Electorate, Port Hacking High School



Jennifer Moore - Sydney Electorate, Haberfield Public School



Karyn Denaro - South Coast Electorate, Merimbula Public School



Leanne Cross - Mid North Coast Electorate, Narranga Public School



Lisa Dickson - Macarthur Electorate, Elderslie Public School



Marti Parolin - South West Sydney Electorate, Prairiewood High School



Tracey Platt - Southern and Central Tablelands Electorate, Bathurst Public School



Nicole Husband - New England Electorate, Glen Innes Public School

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Awards Dinner 2020



"Thankyou for organising such a lovely night. It was very enjoyable and fantastic to be able to share it with my fellow Bathurst Public School P&C members who all play a part in our group's volunteering efforts."



"Thank you for a wonderful evening last Friday night. It was a real honour to be recognised in this way and a great event."





"I just wanted to thank you, the P&C Federation and your amazing co-sponsors for the most WONDERFUL evening at the P&C awards dinner on the 28th February.

It was such a fantastic night, the venue was spectacular, the meal amazing and the information from the guest speakers interesting and informative !!

The chance to speak with some other amazing P&C volunteers to know that we are not the only crazy ones out there LOL or the only ones that experience difficulties and also share the same joy doing what we do for the love of the job and the children was an invaluable experience.

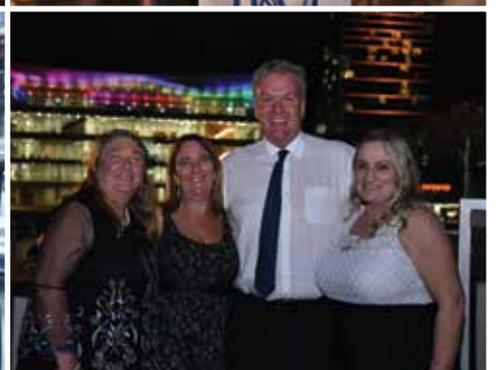
Congratulations to Ingrid a very very deserving winner and lovely lady.

The four of us from Merimbula Public School P&C left the night on a high and full of enthusiasm and bright ideas of all the things we would love to do for our wonderful little school.

We had a BRILLANT time – thank you so much for the opportunity to join you at that evening."



"Thank you for such an amazing night."





CONGRATULATIONS TO NSW P&C VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR 2019

Ingrid Waite

As the awards dinner evening progressed, anticipation grew about who would be crowned the NSW P&C Volunteer of the Year 2019. Following the announcement of the 14 successful finalists, James Corbett – CBA General Manager Customer Service Strategy and Operations and Veronica Howarth - CBA Head of School Banking, took to the stage and with an audience drumroll, James opened the sealed envelope announcing Ingrid Waite from Castle Hill High School as the title winner.



Ingrid was overwhelmed by the announcement that she had been chosen as the title winner and needed to be gently coerced into giving a short speech in which she graciously stated that so many more than one is deserving of this title.

After giving Ingrid time to take it all in, we asked her to answer a few questions so we could learn a little more about her and her experience being a P&C Association volunteer.

1. How did you feel when you heard you had been nominated by your P&C Association? See below.

2. When you were notified you were a finalist, how did you feel?

Well, the answers to the above two questions are the same because the P&C Executive managed a very successful stealth event. I was absent at the meetings where my

name was put forward and voted on and then I have obviously been caught out by not keeping up with the minutes of the meetings I missed. So, the first I knew



about the nomination was when I received a phone call from the P&C President about two minutes before I read the email from Debbie announcing I was a finalist. I was totally shocked to begin with and just couldn't take it in, but the after an hour or two I was just so honored and touched by the fact that the P&C even thought about nominating me. This quickly passed to excitement when I read the details for the award night and finally just so truly grateful to the P&C to be acknowledged in this way.

3. Crowned "NSW P&C Volunteer of the Year 2019", how excited are you?

As I said on the night, those of us who do volunteer do not do so with the thought of attending events like this or receiving awards. So the fact that P&C Federation make the effort to acknowledge their volunteers and treat them to an amazing night out with

wonderful food, a few drinks and the chance to meet other wonderful volunteers, was appreciated by all of us there and for me that was reward enough, but then they actually read my name out. It was truly, truly incredible and I just could not believe it.

4. What inspired you towards volunteering? Tell us more about your journey - how and when did it all start?

For me the volunteering started when I came to Australia. Coming from the UK with four small children we knew nobody, and I didn't understand the school system at all, so like everybody else I started in the canteen one day a month asking lots of questions which is where I learnt about the P&C meetings. So, I decided to turn up to learn more. At first it was all a bit confusing as they talked about Chocolate drives, Mufti days and Red Food Days but gradually I came to grips with it all and learnt just how much extra the P&C contribute to the schools. My son has Asperger's and was receiving a lot of help at the school and I wanted to help by giving back to the school in the only way I could which was by giving my time, willingness and a fair amount of energy. The first event I helped organize was a Mother's Day Stall which was so much fun and seeing the children at the stall was just so rewarding. It really took on from there, as I gained more experience, I joined the Executive committee so I could have a say in the decision-making processes, then became Secretary, then Vice President

Every single hour someone volunteers definitely helps the P&C. We would much rather have ten people giving one hour than one person doing ten hours.



Ingrid & Jeremy Waite

then President. This is over three different P&C committees and I have been very lucky as all three committees have been a pleasure to work with.

5. What's been the most memorable volunteering experience so far?

For me it was my first Relay for Life Event. I had heard about the event for a while but for one reason or another was not available on the weekends it was on. However, one year I was able to. I was only meant to man the tent for an hour or two but ending up staying half the day. The camaraderie and positivity combined with the emotion of the survivor's lap and the remembrance of all those people who should have still been with us made it an incredibly moving event. The people that organize this local event and those that participate are truly inspirational and I'm extremely proud of the fact that Castle Hill High School have had a team at the event ever since it started.

6. Other than volunteering, what makes you happy?

Well those that know me know I do love my 'quiet time'. I love to read where I can disappear into any world of my choosing. I love logic type puzzles that make you think, and I especially like trying the Escape Rooms that are popping up. For exercise and fresh air, I walk my three dogs and now I have a bit more free time I would like to get back into yoga.

7. What message would you like to give to all the P&C Association volunteers and community members out there supporting their school community and students?

No amount of volunteering is too small. Do not be put off if you think 'I can only volunteer for one or two hours that's not going to be helpful so the is no point'. Every single hour someone volunteers definitely helps the P&C. We would

much rather have ten people giving one hour than one person doing ten hours. It means we have connected with a greater quantity of the community we are always seeking to engage, and it gives you the chance to have your opinion heard. On that note I would also say if you can't attend the meeting don't be afraid to email your P&C with questions, comments, ideas, praise and even criticism. The P&C definitely needs its members to drive it forward and we appreciate any time that they give up especially as many families find themselves 'time poor' in our increasingly busy lives.

if volunteers knew this and were paired with Employees they can talk with, it may just be that extra support that would give them the confidence to volunteer.

Finding the most efficient platform to connect with our members is also another struggle – with so many social media outlets available now we probably need to branch out from the traditional Newsletter as the sole means of communication and find additional platforms to engage with our members whilst navigating strict Social Media guidelines, but I do think it essential that P&C need to promote



*Front row L -R **Tim Spencer** - P&C Federation President and Councillor for North West Sydney electorate, **Liga Hegner** - Castle Hill HS P&C, **Ingrid Waite** - NSW P&C Volunteer of the Year 2019 - Castle Hill S P&C, **Natalie Walker** - P&C Federation Vice President and Councillor for Far West electorate, **Saba Nabi** - P&C Federation Councillor Riverina electorate, **Joanna Austin** - ACNC Director Legal Back Row L - R **James Corbett** - CBA General Manager Customer Service Strategy and Operations, **Alan Gardiner** - P&C Federation Secretary and Councillor North Sydney electorate, **Veronica Howarth** - CBA Head of School Banking, **Jason Ryan** - P&C Federation Councillor Mid North Coast electorate, **Anna Longley** - ACNC - Assistant Commissioner - General Counsel, **Warwick Ryan** - Hicksons Lawyer*

8. Finally, what advice would you give P&C Associations to encourage volunteer participation?

I would say we need to make more of an effort to engage those members whose first language may not be English. I know how difficult it was for me to settle in a new Country with no family – it can be very isolating, and I was fluent in the local language. The P&C was definitely a lifeline for me. Can you imagine how isolating it would be if English wasn't your first language? I believe there are a lot of Parents and Carers out there who do not feel confident enough to volunteer due to the language barrier but if we can give them the confidence to volunteer both side would benefit, For example in the canteen at Castle Hill High School we have 10 Employees who speak a range of languages including Mandarin, Spanish and Korean so



Veronica Howarth-CBA Head of School Banking, Ingrid Waite and James Corbett - CBA General Manager Customer Service Strategy and Operations

themselves more and the many benefits it adds to a school. Carers need to know exactly how their time and money is being utilized and how it directly benefits the school and ultimately their children.

COMING SOON

P&C FEDERATION'S ON-LINE LEARNING PLATFORM FOR MEMBERS



Over the past five years, P&C Federation has been delivering information sessions face to face to P&C Associations across NSW. During this time, we have been listening to our members who are not always able to attend these sessions for one reason or another.

This has prompted P&C Federation to investigate other options for our members to learn about a variety of topics relating to P&C Associations, their role in schools, office bearers, decision makers and compliance requirements, just to name a few. Besides our website which is full of resources, calling or emailing the office, P&C Federation has been working on an additional two options for P&C Associations to learn: video link information sessions and an on-line Learning platform.

Very soon P&C Federation will be launching its on-line learning platform for members with the first two course topics, Introduction to P&C Associations and Governance and Introduction to Roles and Responsibilities. So, keep an eye out for the launch which will be coming soon.

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www.health.nsw.gov.au

P&C Federation

Find the current information and advice on things like AGMs, fundraising, employment, school operations etc.

www.pandc.org.au

Department of Education

Get the latest information, media releases and announcements.

www.education.nsw.gov.au

Services Australia

Information and services that may help your P&C Association.

www.servicesaustralia.gov.au

NSW School Updates app

Receive operational status updates for NSW public schools.

Download for IOS or Android

Fair Work Ombudsman

Check for up to date information regarding employment

www.coronavirus.fairwork.gov.au

ACNC

(Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission)

Information of registered not for profits and operations

www.acnc.gov.au

Coronavirus Government App

Download for IOS or Android

JobKeeper Payment

Information for employers

www.ato.gov.au/general/gen/JobKeeper-payment

JobSeeker Payment

Information for individuals

www.service.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/immediate-income-assistance

Remember...

..keep in constant communication with your Principal for more school-specific news and updates.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AT THEIR FINGERTIPS

Supplied by the Department of Education

A new app that alerts parents if their child's school has to close due to emergencies such as bushfires is now available for download.

The free 'NSW School Updates' app allows NSW public school parents to sign up to receive an alert if their child's school has to close – and an alert notification when the school will open again.

The development of the app follows a series of disasters such as the summer bushfires and floods earlier this year. At the peak of the bushfire crisis, 20,000 people a minute visited the Department of Education's school safety page, which has had more than 1.35 million visitors since November 2019.

The Minister for Education and Early Learning, Sarah Mitchell, said: "We have learnt you can never over-communicate in a crisis.

"The past few months have been incredibly

challenging both for school communities in bushfire and now flood-impacted areas."

The app will complement existing efforts by schools and the Department of Education to ensure families are provided with timely and accurate information. The app will expand over time to provide more centralised information to parents and families.

The NSW School Updates app is available at:

iOS: <https://apps.apple.com/au/app/nsw-school-updates/id1494658146>

Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.gov.nsw.education.nswschoolsafetyupdates>

How does it work? Simply download the app, open it, select your school – or schools – and opt in to receive notifications. If your school is closed you will receive an alert and be provided with a link to your school's



website – where you may be able to get more information – as well as a link to the Department of Education's school safety page.

Does the app store my data? No. The app does not store any personal or identifiable information. When the app is in use, it communicates with the department's servers storing a unique identifier for your device; the schools that you have pre-selected; and whether you have opted in to receive push notifications.

I have different children at different schools. How do I register for multiple schools? The app allows you to select any number of public schools for which to receive updates.

STUDENTS ASKED TO RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

Supplied by the Department of Education

The Game Changer Challenge is back this year with six new qualifying heats to be held across NSW in Term 2 – in Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Parramatta, Sydney CBD, Tamworth and Wagga Wagga.

The Game Changer Challenge is a unique opportunity for both students and teachers and highlights how our public schools are preparing students for a rapidly changing world.

The Department of Education has expanded the design thinking challenge to put 72 teams – a total of 350 students and 72 teachers – into the competition, which aims to elevate the skills of critical thinking, collaboration, empathy and creativity.

The winners of the heats will contest the Game Changer Challenge state final in Parramatta from 4 to 6 August during Education Week.

Design thinking is a tool that teachers can add to their repertoire to develop students' future-focused skills and

learning across the curriculum – in particular, the interdisciplinary application of knowledge to solve complex real-world problems.

A new resource, Design thinking across the curriculum, developed by the Department's Learning Design and Development team, is



Students competing in the 2019 Game Changer Challenge

a great starting point for the Game Changer Challenge and for use in the classroom across all subjects.

Read all about the Game Changer Challenge at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/game-changer-challenge.html>.



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CAREERS ADVISER ROLE IN YEAR 10 SUBJECT SELECTION

Supplied by



In Year 10, students will select HSC subjects that they will study for the next two years. It's important that students lay a strong foundation for their future plans by choosing the subjects that are right for them. The Careers Adviser acts as a **conduit** for students to: understand themselves; to know how to explore and plan careers; to understand the labour market and the tertiary sector. It is the Career Adviser's role to advise and assist with the decision-making processes surrounding Subject Selection.

Careers Adviser

Subject selection connects inextricably with Career choices and it is important for Year 10 students to consult with the Career Adviser on these matters. It is also important for students to involve their parents in this important decision-making process. The involvement of parents at this important time is to be encouraged.

The involvement of a Careers Adviser in Subject Selection and Career Education varies in each school depending on a range of factors including school requirements and time allocation for the role. Depending on how the role of the Careers Adviser has been structured in your school, Careers Advisers may help with Subject Selection in many ways including:

- Leading students in lessons that will identify their interests, skills and abilities, values, career personality and aptitude.
- Provision of timely lessons relating to Subject Selection and career planning.
- Individual guidance and advice to students regarding subject choice.
- Electronic support of subject choices through referral to online platforms which assist students to: identify their skills and interests; investigate subject requirements for careers, courses and jobs.
- Link subject learning at school to the future workplace.

- Participation in the subject selection process including leadership of, or involvement in, the student interviews process.
- Provide access to Tertiary providers through school visits, career expos and tertiary engagement experiences including University, TAFE and Private College Open days.
- Active participation in individual interviews of students for subject selection including follow up interviews of students referred for Career Advice after initial subject selection interviews.
- Helping to develop and implement transition plans and conducting transition interviews with students.
- Organise Vocational Education and Training options for students interested in completing a vocational pathway involving TAFE study or School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships.
- Advice of students to demonstrate understanding of pathways beyond year 10.

Student Self-Knowledge

It is vital for students to participate in a process of identifying their: interests, skills and abilities, values, career personality and aptitude. Careers Advisers may assist with this self-evaluation process. This can be important in helping students to develop plans and pathways to support knowledge

of future study options and pathways to career(s) that interest them and that they may have aptitude for. There are a number of tools, products and services that may support this self-evaluation process which the Careers Adviser may use when they believe they will serve the needs of the school community.

Careers Advisers may also provide opportunities to have private career consultations which may involve parents. These meetings are timely and strategically designed to support the self-evaluation process that is necessary: preceding subject selection; after exams and following career assessment tools.

Planning and Goal Setting

The Career Adviser is integral in assisting students to **develop plans** for the future. It is important that students have a number of plans at the beginning of their studies considering that their level of success is unknown at the commencement of their HSC studies. The Career Adviser is responsible for providing students with the leadership to engage with career planning that will empower

It is vital for students to participate in a process of identifying their: interests, skills and abilities, values, career personality and aptitude.

students with the capacity to research career choices, both in the present and future tense.

Closely linked to the concept of planning and goal setting, is **decision making** and assisting students to make suitable choices that align with their capabilities, skills and aspirations. Careers Advisers will often work through activities with students, so that they are both familiar and confident with themselves and how knowledge of self connects with goals and plans for the future.

Students should have knowledge of all **tertiary pathways** including: early entry; Equity Access Scheme; Scholarships; Adjustment Factors (for University applications) as well as TAFE and Private College options. This knowledge can be supported by the Careers Adviser through opportunities to engage with the tertiary sector including: School Visits; tertiary programs; University TAFE and Private College Open Days and giving students access to Career Expos.



Students should have knowledge of the University Admissions Centre (UAC) submission process where they can choose up to five courses. This will help with contingency planning. Careers Advisers often lead their students through this planning process using a variety of tools to support students. Related to this, Careers Advisers may help students understand the **ATAR** and how it is a rank that is only used for applications to University that is separate to the **HSC**, and to support their decision regarding whether to pursue an ATAR or a non-ATAR pattern of study.

Careers Advisers are integral in helping students to access the tools and knowledge that they need to develop their own education and work goals. It is important for students to seek advice regarding their future plans. Having a plan may help students to research possible future courses in order to understand whether there are any recommended courses, assumed knowledge or even prerequisites.

What is the difference? To say a course is **recommended** suggests: that it may provide a good contextual understanding but is not essential. The term **assumed knowledge** suggests: that performance will be impaired and the average student will have difficulty passing the specified course unless this HSC subject is selected. Finally, if a subject is identified as a **prerequisite**: the absence of this subject in the pattern of studies will prevent selection entirely. It is not uncommon that a student may change their mind during their HSC studies. Where this change requires a 'bridging course' the Careers Adviser may provide this advice.

Career Exploration and Work Experience

An Important part of Career Exploration is **Work Experience**. The Careers Adviser may facilitate the process of students engaging with the workforce. Giving students the chance to 'engage with the workforce,' promotes both self-discovery, as well as career exploration. Students learn that the career they are considering is either ideal or unsuitable. Through career exploration students engage with both the workforce and their own plans for the future. The work experience is invaluable as it helps students to either confirm or re-examine their plans. For many students this career exploration can impact on subject selection and motivation to achieve their goals.

Knowledge of the Labour Market, Employment Trends & Employability Skills

It is important for students to have an understanding of the **Labour Market** and emerging employment trends such as the **Casualisation of the workforce** and the '**Gig economy**.' This will assist students to make informed decisions relating to tertiary studies and/or future employment pathways. Again, there are a number of products and



resources that the Careers Adviser will use in the implementation of the education of students. The aim of Careers Programs is to support students to develop their own research skills so that they are empowered to be autonomous adults capable of traversing an ever-changing job market. The development of **Employability Skills** will help with the resilience necessary for young people as they transition to the world of work.

In short, there are many ways that the Careers Adviser may participate in the Subject Selection process of Year 10 students to facilitate the successful transition into Year 11 and Year 12. Central to this transition is the process of self-evaluation of interests, abilities, values and attitudes. A guiding philosophical principle, as espoused by UAC representatives, resonates: "Do what you are interested in and good at." This is a great starting point, but the Careers Adviser may also support students to: understand themselves; know how to explore and plan careers; to understand the labour market and the tertiary sector. The aim of a Careers Adviser is to help prepare students to be self-directed in their Career Exploration so that they are resilient and flexible life-long learners that are fit for the dynamic changes to employment that will characterise the job sector of the future. **The subject selection process provides Careers Advisers with a vital role for preparing students for that future.**

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

WARILLA STUDENTS LEAD THEIR SCHOOL TO GO SOLAR

Supplied by the Return and Earn Container Deposit Scheme

A Warilla school is aiming to become completely self-sufficient with power, after using the Return and Earn NSW container deposit scheme to fundraise for solar panels.

The idea came from students in Warilla High School's Student Representative Council who were concerned about the environment and also aware of how much power their school used. They decided to use the Return and Earn scheme to reduce litter and landfill, while also fundraising for sustainable power.

"Our students understand the impact of climate change and the impact of plastic on their environment," said teacher Brandon Harry. "Because we're located close to the ocean, and the students are surfers and swimmers, they see firsthand the impact of plastic on the ocean and the beach."

As a large school of 1,400 students, the electricity bills were significant too. "The cost was astronomical - \$15,000 per quarter, so \$60,000 per year," said Brandon.

The students got to work. They acquired recycling bins, and a volunteer student 'Sortin' Squad' was formed to separate the recycling before returning it. Students make sure the drink bottles and cans from the cafeteria - 8,000 containers per semester - are all returned.

Community members are also encouraged to donate their container refunds to the school.

Through Return and Earn, the students raised \$2,500 towards the initial 50 solar panels. These panels were installed at the beginning of the year and have already halved the school's power bills.

"We recently signed off on another 50 panels, also partly funded by the recycling," said Brandon. "We're also changing the lights in the school to LEDs, and hopefully after that we'll be self-sufficient."

Brandon added that the savings on electricity would be able to go back into the school to support learning and development.

The next step for the students' fundraising is for cold water bubblers. They are also planning on upgrading recycling bins so the school can recycle all the paper and cardboard used in classrooms as well.

Return and Earn gives consumers a 10c refund for each eligible drink container returned at any of the 640 return points across NSW. Since launching in December 2017, more than 2.6 billion drink containers have been returned for recycling via Return and Earn, resulting in a significant reduction in the volume of eligible littered drink containers in NSW.

Summer is peak season for 'return and earners'. All users of the scheme are reminded to recycle responsibly and take any rubbish with you. Visit www.returnandearn.org.au for more information on Return and Earn or to find your nearest return point.

by Wendy Bruere

CADDIE CREEK STUDENTS LEARN - AND TEACH - SUSTAINABILITY

Supplied by the Return and Earn Container Deposit Scheme

When Return and Earn was launched in NSW, teachers Jenny Henson and Carol Van De Maele at Caddie Creek Public School in Blacktown saw the NSW container deposit scheme as a great way for students to learn about environmental sustainability.

Recycling bins, as well as dedicated Return and Earn bins, were soon installed at the school.

Jenny said the results were impressive. "There has definitely been a big reduction in litter on school grounds. The students have developed a huge awareness of the impact on the environment of plastic and bottles."

The money raised via the 10c refund per

container goes to adopting animals through World Wildlife and Taronga Zoo. "We've adopted a koala and a Tasmanian devil," said Jenny. "The kids absolutely love it - it gives a lot of purpose to what we do."

Introducing the Return and Earn bins also meant teachers were able to incorporate recycling into the school curriculum.

"A lot of programs in class are now based on waste management, sustainability and how to reduce our impact on the environment," said Jenny. "We link this to maths with waste audits, and to English by writing persuasive texts about the need to recycle."

The impact has spread beyond just the school too. "We recently ran twilight markets with

waste stations with information and signage, and the students manned the stations and showed people what can and can't be recycled," said Jenny. "The kids go home and teach their parents about recycling and sustainability - they take the message into their homes and into the community."

By Wendy Bruere



SHINING A LIGHT ON A CRUEL CHAPTER

Supplied by the Department of Education



Department of Education Deputy-Secretary Georgina Harrisson and Connected Communities' Director Luke Ballard with the bus and survivors Patrick Roberts, Lester Maher and Michael Welsh.

A group of Aboriginal men who were removed as children from their families have hit the road to share their stories in Australia's first Stolen Generations mobile education centre.

The Kinchela Boys Home developed the mobile exhibition with the support of the NSW Department of Education and other government agencies.

The interior of an old commuter bus houses an exhibition that tells the story of more than 400 Aboriginal boys who were inmates at the Kinchela Boys Home, at Kempsey on the NSW mid-north coast, between 1924 and 1970.

The boys who were removed to Kinchela were stripped of their names on arrival and referred to by numbers. Many of them suffered horrific physical, psychological and sexual abuse.

The mobile education centre will travel across NSW, visiting schools and communities to

expand the understanding of the Stolen Generations taught in schools.

The exhibition includes part of the old Kinchela Boys Home gate, while the back half of the bus has been converted into a cinema that will show a short film produced by some of the survivors.

The bus entrance area is painted with the numbers the boys were given to replace their names. Richard Campbell, who designed the bus artwork, was known as number 28 in the home.

He said the travelling exhibition was about acknowledging the 'strength of Stolen Generations victims and the work they are doing so the pain stops with them'.

Fellow survivor Michael Welsh (number 36) said the mobile education centre would support truth-telling and healing within their communities.

'It's part of the journey to break the intergenerational trauma that has landed upon our children,' he said.

Department of Education Deputy-Secretary Georgina Harrisson said the project would play an important role in educating students about what happened at the Kinchela Boys Home and the wider story of the Stolen Generations.

'The survivors have created this exhibition to make sure the injustices of the past are not forgotten,' she said.

'Their crucial outreach work will ensure that we not only know the truth about what happened at the boys' home, but contribute to the important healing process as we remain conscious of the intergenerational trauma and disadvantage that can live on in descendants of survivors.'

MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER DIGITAL DEVICES IN SCHOOLS

Supplied by the Department of Education

Digital technology has become an important part of our day-to-day lives. Mobile phones are everywhere, including in our schools. They are important for learning, communicating, working and playing, but they also come with some risks.

So how do we balance the importance of digital technology in learning, with the responsibility we all have to support children and young people to use technology in safe, respectful and responsible ways?

The NSW Department of Education's new Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services policy aims to do just that – maximise the potential of digital technology, minimise the risks of harm, and equip our students with the skills they need to be safe, respectful and responsible users of digital technology, and to learn and flourish at and beyond school.

This new policy on the use of digital devices was introduced in NSW public schools from the start of Term 1 2020.

“So much of what we do is influenced by technology - it just falls back to clear expectations and making sure that you follow through with reminding students and prompting students of what the expectations are and creating a supportive and collaborative environment for students to use technology appropriately.”

Paul Tournia, a student wellbeing advisor with the NSW Department of Education

What is in the policy?

The policy describes when and how digital devices and online services are used at school:

Primary-aged students will not be allowed to use digital devices during class time, recess and lunch unless for an educational purpose or for other reasons such as an adjustment to support learning and wellbeing.

Secondary principals will have the flexibility to opt into any restriction on the use of devices or use an approach that best suits the learning and wellbeing needs of their school community.

The policy applies to smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, laptops and any other device that connects to the internet and applications.

Schools – in consultation with their community – will be expected to update their existing school procedures or develop a new one.

This new policy gives us the opportunity to work together – as parents, as carers, as educators – to support our children and young people to learn to be safe, responsible and respectful users of digital devices and online services.

The new policy has been developed in response to the recommendations of an independent review led by child psychologist, Dr Michael Carr-Gregg.

The review considered input from almost 14,000 survey responses and 80 written submissions. Additionally, the review conducted wide-ranging consultation with teachers, parents and students through focus groups and interviews. It incorporated input from around 2,000 parents, 9,000 students and 3,000 educators; experts in child development, cyberbullying, mental health and technology; as well as academics, peak groups and key stakeholders.

How can parent and carers help?

Parents and carers can make a big difference by partnering with their school to work together to support our children and young people to be safe, responsible and respectful users of digital devices and online services.

Six important practical things parents can do to help are:

1. Find out what your school's approach is going to be and discuss it with your child.
2. Monitor your child's use of digital devices and online services (website and apps) and any age and content restrictions.
3. Be mindful of your use of digital devices while around your children.
4. Teach your children to use technology in a healthy way and pick up the skills and habits that will make them successful digital citizens.
5. If your child's school has a 'bring your own device' program make sure any digital device you provide your child meets those specifications.
6. Are you aware of – and can you view – your child's online activities?

Parents should be reassured that if they need to contact their child about important matters during school hours, the best way is to call the school office.

Schools will have procedures in place should your child need to contact you during the school day. Schools are best placed to assess the situation and allow students to use the school phone if required.



“We have clear guidelines around the way that we use devices in safe, respectful and responsible ways that helps teachers and students.

Parents need to know that this is not just a ban on mobile phones. It is about putting some guidelines in place so that teachers, students and parents know what the expectations are. We want our students to be engaged in learning, we don't want technology to be a distraction.”

Clint White, Principal of Sylvania Heights Public School

What support is there for parents?

Visit your school's website or contact your school principal to find out what's happening at your school.

The full policy can be viewed at: <https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library>.

Read about the review into non-educational use of mobile devices in NSW and find the FAQs on the new policy at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/our-reports-and-reviews/mobile-devices-in-schools>.

Check out the department's new Digital Citizenship website which includes a special section for parents with useful articles and advice at <https://www.digitalcitizenship.nsw.edu.au>.

You can view the new toolkit on the eSafety Commissioner's website at <https://www.esafety.gov.au>.

“Talk about it. Having communication channels open with your children is really, really important.

Talk to the teachers, talk to the school because they are the providers of all that information if you don't have it already.

There are a lot of resources online such as the Department's Digital Citizenship website. The eSafety Commissioner's website is also an excellent resource for parents.”

Mona Sidhu, Online Coordinator, ICT Coordinator and Physics teacher.

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