

# Institute of Retired Senior Educational Administrators

IRSEA Annual General Meeting

22 March 2024

**Deb Summerhayes PSM**

Deputy Secretary Public Schools



Education







Artwork painted by La Perouse Public School Students



# NSW Public Schools



800K

students



114

networks



9

school directorates



2,217

schools



110K+

school staff



9.3%

Aboriginal students



0 to 255

school FOEI  
range



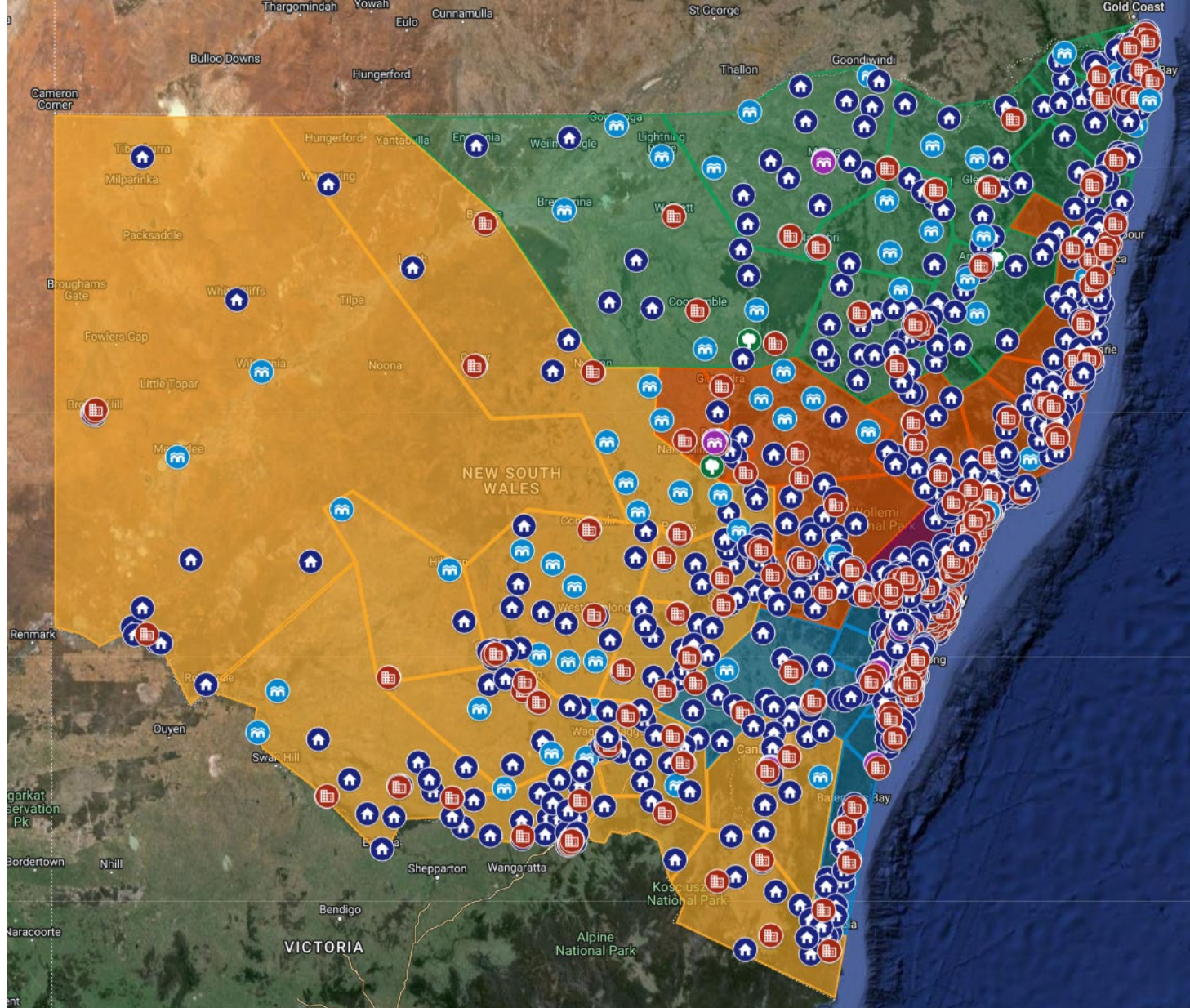
38%

LBOTE



247

languages  
spoken



NSW Public Schools Map - Online  
[tinyurl.com/NSWPSMap](https://tinyurl.com/NSWPSMap)

# Our context is challenging, with the most student need

1 in 4 government school students attend a school where half of students are most disadvantaged

This is 3 in 100 for non-government schools

2022 schools with high concentration of disadvantage		
Government	719	94%
Catholic	11	1%
Independent	38	5%
TOTAL	768	100%

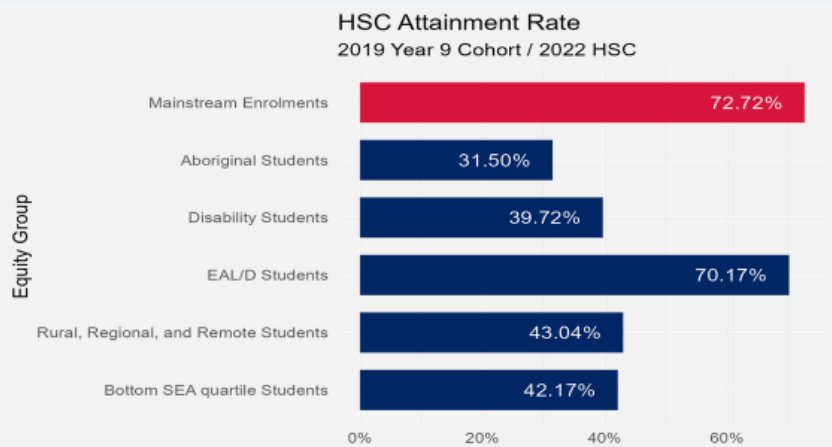
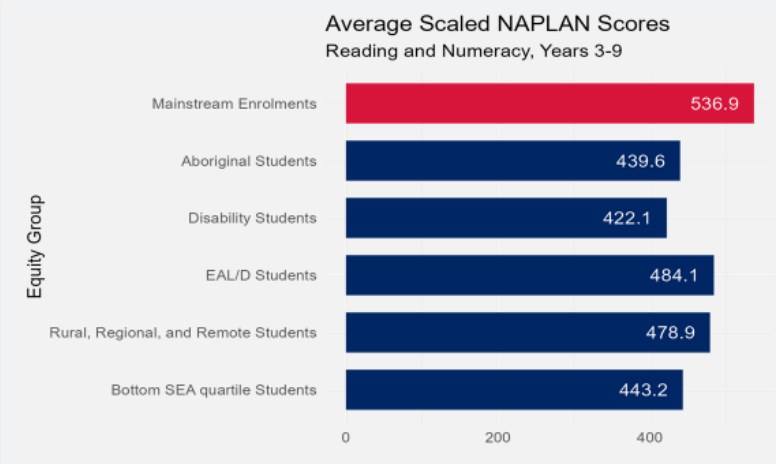
1 in 5 students in government schools have a disability or additional learning needs.

Government schools are not yet at the minimum funding standard

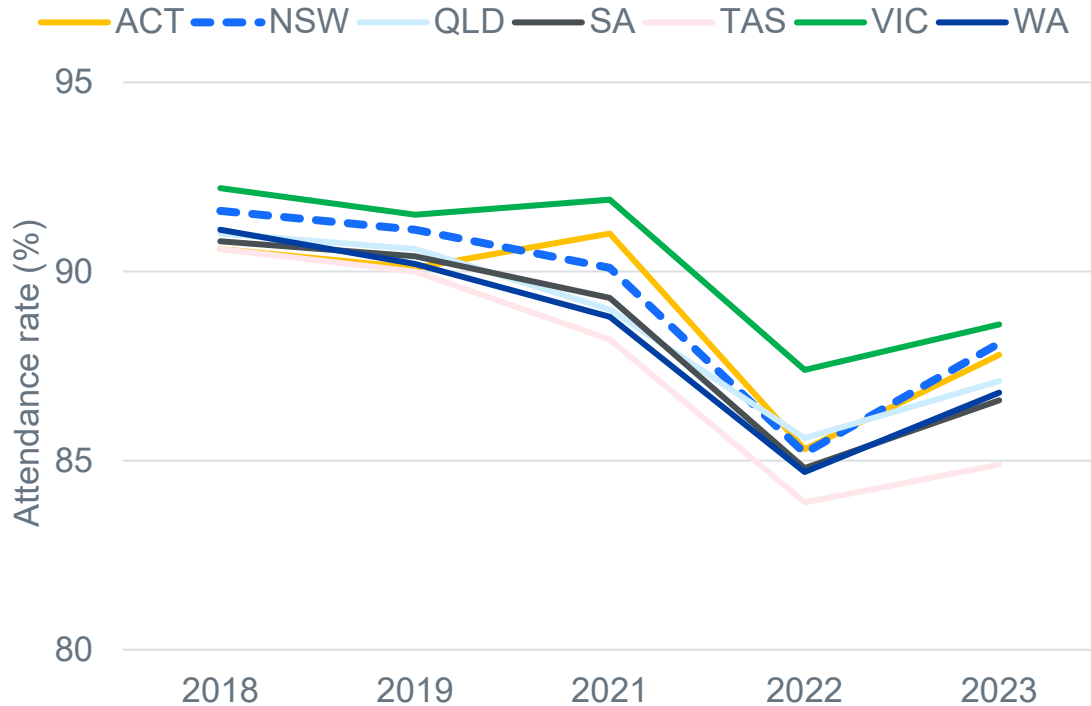
Non-government schools are above the minimum and have been for years

Gaps are generally persistent across all measures for equity groups

Previous policy has widened these gaps



# Attendance is improving, but student wellbeing is a concern in line with global trends



Post-COVID attendance is rebounding across Australia, and NSW recorded the largest increase between 2022 and 2023.

This is a substantial increase, from 85.2% to 88.1%. While that's noteworthy, there is more to do to get back to a rate above 90%.

## A sense of belonging at school drives high levels of effort and motivation

### In 2023:

- In NSW, the proportion of students reporting an overall positive **sense of belonging** has fallen by 4 pp since 2016 in primary (to 84 %) and 10 pp in secondary (to 54 %).
- Almost 2 out of 10 primary students and around 4 out of 10 high school students don't have a positive **sense of belonging** at school.
- Since 2022, **sense of belonging** dropped across all year levels, particularly in Year 6, Year 7, and Year 8.
- Around half of secondary students say they feel positive about the **advocacy** (including care) they get from teachers at school.
- 13% of primary school students say they have experienced **cyber-bullying** – slightly below secondary students' experiences of cyber-bullying (16%).

### Productivity Commission interim report:

- Cardenas et al. (2022) found that reducing self-reported depression in Year 8 by one standard deviation would increase Year 9 NAPLAN numeracy and reading scores by 7 per cent.
- Improving an average student's wellbeing by one standard deviation would increase their numeracy score by 5 per cent.



CONNECT



SUCCEED



THRIVE



# NSW has made good gains in academic outcomes but progress is not yet quick enough or consistent



## Phonics Check 2023

59.4% of students at expected achievement level  
4% improvement on 2022.

Slower rate of improvement than other jurisdictions

## NAPLAN Results 2023

NSW is above the national average for all year levels in each domain.  
Highest mean scores in the country in Year 5 and 7 numeracy, Year 3 writing, spelling in all years and Year 3, 5 & 7 grammar and punctuation.

Lack of progress on closing equity gaps

## PISA Results 2022

Significantly improved performance in scientific literacy of 12%  
Insignificant improvement of 6% in reading and 2% in mathematical literacy

Improved ranking largely comparative decline  
Students not engaged

## HSC Results 2023

More than a third of public school students are in the top 2 HSC bands  
A small improvement (0.6%)

Equity gaps in attainment and achievement  
Decreasing attainment rates

# The promise of Public Education

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Our commitment to provide equitable opportunities, experiences and outcomes to transform lives through learning.

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# What does equity mean for the department?



Equity means that we recognise the rights of all students and learners to access and participate fully in education and realise their educational potential. We strive to adapt practices and policy settings to remove barriers to education, and channel support where it is most needed.



# Agreed department definition

‘Baking’ equity in is our ‘forever’ work

Student  
centred  
purpose and  
goals

Aligns with national  
approach including the  
Mparntwe Declaration.

Supporting equity well is a  
capability for all decision -  
makers.

Recognises equity is  
different to equality

Equity means that we recognise the right of all  
students and learners to access and participate  
fully in education and realise their educational  
potential. We strive to adapt and adjust practices  
and policy settings to remove barriers to education,  
and channel support where it is most needed.

System, sector  
and staff -  
oriented actions  
and quality  
descriptors

The right to education is  
enshrined in international  
instruments and protected  
under the NSW Education  
Act.

Equity is ‘forever work’.  
Fostering an equity  
culture is key.

Consistent with the Our  
Plan for NSW Public  
Education, this commits  
the department to  
address structural drivers  
of educational inequality

# Our Plan for NSW Public Education

## Transforming lives through learning

Our plan is built on the power of public education to provide opportunities for all and transform lives through learning. Our plan sets our direction and priorities for the coming years, and harnesses the commitment of our teachers and schools to provide an outstanding education for every learner. Our approach has been informed by evidence and insights from engagement with our education community.

### Our commitment

Every student learns, grows and belongs in an equitable and outstanding education system.

### Acknowledgment of Country

We recognise the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we learn, work and live, paying respect to Elders past and present as teachers of knowledge, songlines and stories. We strive to ensure every NSW Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander learner achieves their potential through education.



Together we will	Advance equitable outcomes, opportunities and experiences	Strengthen trust and respect for the teaching profession and school support staff	Give children the best start in learning	Deliver outstanding leadership, teaching and learning	Strengthen student wellbeing and development	Provide meaningful post-school pathways
<b>With actions that</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster a culture that values diversity by advancing reconciliation and eliminating barriers</li> <li>Ensure schools have access to the staff and specialists they need</li> <li>Prioritise resources where they are needed most</li> <li>Develop targeted, differentiated, evidence-informed initiatives and supports</li> <li>Embed diverse learner, family and staff voices in decision-making</li> <li>Provide broad, inclusive and rich curriculum with strong co-curricular activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address staffing shortages</li> <li>Attract and retain more high-quality teachers, especially in high-need locations and specialist subject areas</li> <li>Ensure initial teacher education is fit for purpose by partnering with the university sector</li> <li>Improve staff wellbeing</li> <li>Address workload pressures to ensure a manageable workload for all staff</li> <li>Support staff development through high-quality and accessible professional learning</li> <li>Make public education a more attractive career with more quality career pathways</li> <li>Strengthen development for leaders at all stages of their careers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase enrolment and participation in preschool for all children</li> <li>Build new public preschools co-located with public primary schools</li> <li>Create better transitions between early education and primary school</li> <li>Deliver the NSW Aboriginal Children's Early Childhood Education Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support schools to deliver school excellence through continuous improvement</li> <li>Deliver effective teaching practices including explicit teaching and effective feedback underpinned by high expectations</li> <li>Strengthen educational and instructional leadership</li> <li>Provide high-quality, evidence-based curriculum resources</li> <li>Increase student literacy and numeracy</li> <li>Strengthen high-quality assessment</li> <li>Improve how data is used to inform teaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement evidence-informed, whole-school wellbeing approaches</li> <li>Create positive school cultures that value student voice</li> <li>Build partnerships with students and families to connect them with the support they need</li> <li>Provide equitable access to services by building partnerships across agencies</li> <li>Expand counselling services in schools</li> <li>Improve support for students at all transitions through school</li> <li>Ensure schools are inclusive and safe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance access to high-quality vocational education and training (VET) in schools, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, and HSC pathways</li> <li>Support, inform and inspire all students to choose post-school pathway options aligned to their goals</li> <li>Improve access, opportunities and choice across post-school pathways including university, training and work for all students</li> </ul>
<b>So</b>	Every learner receives a high-quality education that enables them to excel	Our teachers and staff feel valued, included and supported to perform at their best	All children have the best start in life	Every student achieves ambitious learning goals every year	Every student is known, valued and cared for	Every student finishes school ready to succeed in their chosen pathway as an informed, responsible citizen
<b>And we'll measure success by</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing gaps in student outcomes, due to structural inequities</li> <li>Increasing community confidence in public education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the number of school staff so supply meets demand</li> <li>Increasing the proportion of teachers and school staff who feel valued, trusted and respected in their profession</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the proportion of children enrolled in preschool</li> <li>Increasing the proportion of children who are developmentally on track</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students</li> <li>Increasing the proportion of students completing Year 12 in public schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the proportion of students reporting a sense of belonging</li> <li>Increasing attendance rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the proportion of students who take up university, training or work in the year after school</li> </ul>

Enabled by



Support services that are efficient, effective and easy to access



School infrastructure that meets the needs of a growing population and supports improved student outcomes

Our values



Excellence



Integrity



Equity



Accountability



Trust



Service



# Getting to the heart of the plan

Our plan is built on the power of public education to provide opportunities for all and transform lives through learning. We are committed to making sure every student learns, grows and belongs in an equitable and outstanding education system.

## Why is it important?



**Our plan speaks to our unique purpose.** We have the opportunity to transform lives through the power of learning through our work in public education.



**Our plan is our blueprint.** It sets our direction and priorities for the coming years (2024-2027).



**Our success relies on our collective effort.** We want to harness the commitment of our all staff, teachers and schools to provide an outstanding education for every learner.



# Our 2024 priorities

- Strengthen trust in the communities we serve
- Make public schools the schools of choice
- Address staffing shortages
- Provide equity and excellence in education
- Lead learning

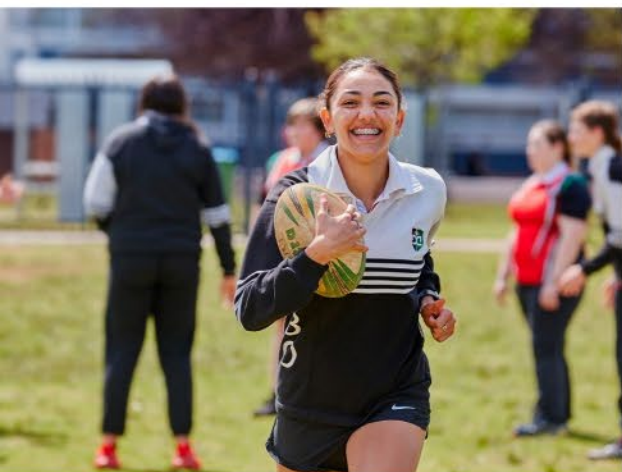




# How do we connect the pieces?







# The joy of our work