NSW GOVERNMENT

2020

ANNUAL REPORT

School Sport Unit



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Programs and priorities

Program	Department priority	Other priority linkages
 **Representative School Sport Pathway**	• Improve school performance and student outcomes • Build pathways • Make the department a great place to work	• Every student is engaged and challenged • Every student is known, valued and cared for • Community confidence in public education is high
 **Disability and participation**	• Improve school performance and student outcomes • Build pathways • Make the department a great place to work	• Deliver the Disability Strategy • Every student is known, valued and cared for • Every student is engaged and challenged
 **NSW Premier's Sporting Challenge**	• Improve school performance and student outcomes • Build pathways • Make the department a great place to work	• Every student is engaged and challenged • Build pathways for lifelong learning • Community confidence in public education is high
 **School Swimming and Water Safety Program**	• Improve school performance and student outcomes • Build pathways • Make the department a great place to work	• Every student is known, valued and cared for • All young children make a strong start in life • Community confidence in public education is high
 **Policy and guidelines**	• Improve school performance and student outcomes • Improve teaching quality • Make the department a great place to work	• Our workforce is of the highest calibre • Every student is known, valued and cared for • Community confidence in public education is high
 **Teacher professional learning**	• Improve teaching quality • Strengthen school leadership • Improve school performance and student outcomes	• Amplify the practice of outstanding teachers • Drive a high-performance culture • Our workforce is of the highest calibre



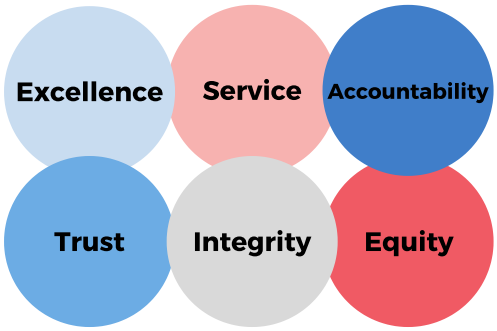
Year in review

2020 has been a challenging year with COVID-19 disrupting many of the School Sport Unit (SSU) programs. I am incredibly proud of SSU staff as they successfully navigated these disruptions, adapted our current business model and worked tirelessly to continue to provide sport and physical opportunities for students across NSW.

I also wish to acknowledge and congratulate all school sport organisers for ensuring the health and wellbeing of their students has remained at the heart of all decisions.

This year has presented us with a valuable opportunity to focus on unit-wide business improvement. Through the development and implementation of the SSU Strategic Plan 2020-2022, we have successfully embedded best practice, streamlined processes and consolidated branded communications, in line with department guidelines.

Department of Education Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Values



We look forward to re-commencing our programs in 2021, and as always, remain committed to building the SSU as a leader in the provision of sport and physical activity opportunities and information.

Thank you for your continued support of the SSU. I encourage you to read through this report, showcasing our achievements this year as a Unit, and highlighting program-specific successes.

Peter Banks
Leader, School Sport Unit

About us and our programs

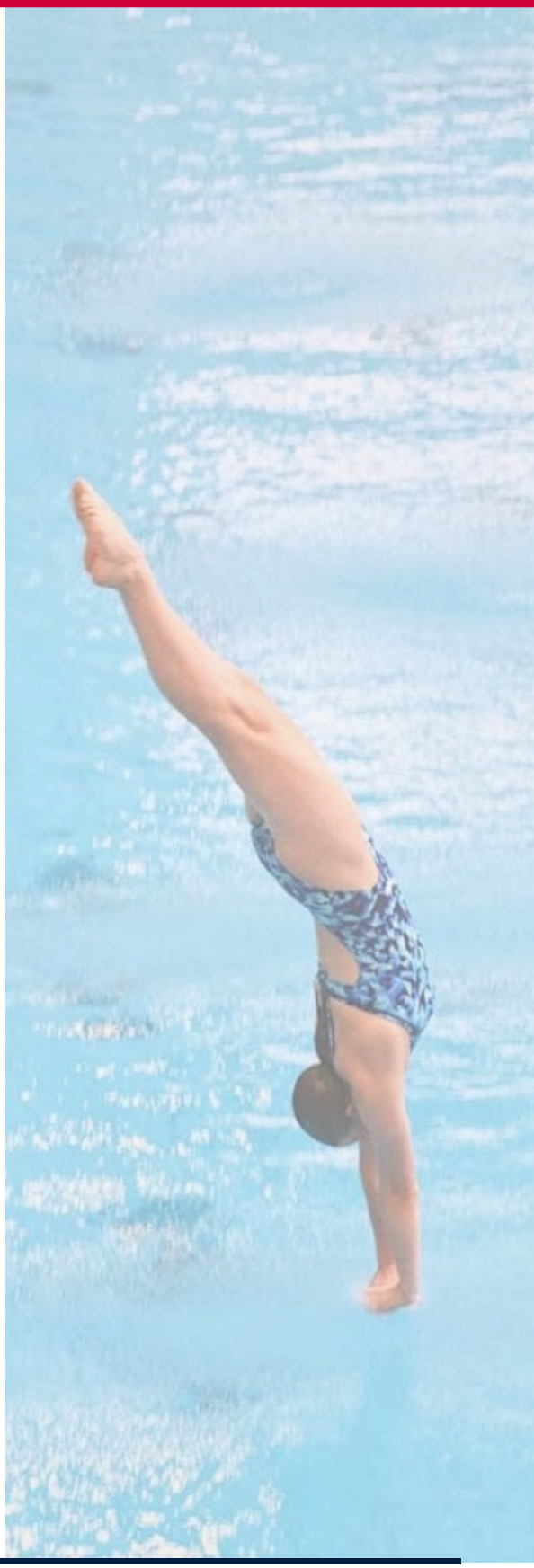
The School Sport Unit (SSU) provides carefully planned, adaptable and enjoyable physical activity experiences for all students in NSW public schools. These programs are encouraged by devoted principals and delivered by highly skilled, motivated teachers who positively shape young people to become engaged in their communities and to lead happy, rewarding lives through a lifelong connection to sport and physical activity.

Our vision

To be the benchmark for equitable and inclusive provision of school sport and physical activity initiatives in Australia

The SSU's programs are:

1. Representative School Sport Pathway
2. Disability and participation
3. NSW Premier's Sporting Challenge
4. School Swimming and Water Safety Program
5. Policy and guidelines
6. Teacher professional learning



Our impact in 2020

1,800+
Students from
151
Schools
Participated in opportunities for students with disability

100+
Schools supported with new wellbeing professional learning package

46,995
Students from
704
Schools
Supported in Term 4 with school-based swimming program

+ 38%
Followers on Facebook

207,480
Website users

1,095,678
Page views

40,000+
Views of the 26 GetActive episodes produced

35,505
Views of sport safety guidelines webpage

4,343
Students and staff participated in the Race Around Australia trial

445,113
Students

1,459
Schools

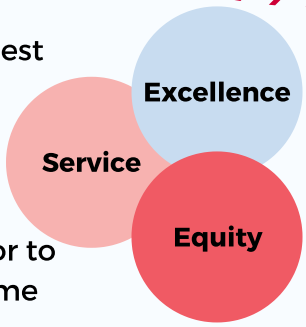
17,209
Staff
Participated in the PSC 10 week Challenge

7
New online professional learning workshops developed

517
Teachers
Attended professional learning workshops

Representative School Sport Pathway

Students aged 8 to 19 years are provided with the opportunity to compete in sport programs at the school, zone, association, state and national levels. This is the longest running high potential and gifted education program in the NSW Department of Education (DoE). Over **100** State Championships in over **30** sports occur annually throughout NSW for both individuals and teams.



Three NSWCHS Championships and a number of association events were held prior to the cancellation of the pathway as a result of COVID-19. Despite this disruption, some events resumed in Term 4 and the representative school sport pathway achieved significant milestones, both as a program and at the association level.

Program achievements:

- Shifted several business processes to an online format, including council meetings, AGMs, voting processes and applications for association positions.
- Developed and implemented significantly revised Executive Officer and Executive Officer Assistant handbooks.
- Updated Association Financial Guidelines and Operating Procedures to ensure ongoing consistency, sustainability and best practice.
- Reformed communications and branding – including website make over, updated documents and improved messaging.
- Developed and launched History of NSW School Sport resources, including historical timeline and Australian Representatives list.
- Engaged over **1,100** teacher, executive and principal volunteers to lead and manage programs and teams across the 12 Associations.

- Developed and launched souvenir apparel online store, available for all students. Its social media launch reached over **6,000** people, leading to **1,337** engagements.
- Updated online application system to DASH to increase security and functionality. This platform will be used for office bearer applications, team officials' positions/ school knockout entries and student registrations. User guides were developed to support teaching staff and parents.

2,330 Schools **392,545** Students

- Developed an inclusivity policy to improve sport participation for secondary school students, particularly students identifying as gender diverse.
- Undertook a significant constitutional and handbook reform, involving the review of **24** sports, **282** pages and **2,337** rules and guidelines.
- Launched a successful online apparel store trial for swimming and diving.

468 Schools **328,131** Students

Representative School Sport Pathway

- Restarted representative sport with zone gala day competitions in futsal and oztag in Term 4.
- Attended by girls' and boys' teams from all **8** affiliated high school zones.
- Distributed grants to all affiliated primary and secondary zones that have stimulated the recommencement of participation sporting activities post COVID-19 restrictions.

258 Schools **101,098** Students

- Actioned a successful boundary restructure of all **13** primary school districts after extensive consultation with all stakeholders.
- Introduced a staggered entry system to South Coast selection trials calibrated to population size.
- Collated an extensive database of **62** AusSwim qualified staff for the School Swimming and Water Safety Program.

215 Schools **53,429** Students

- Conducted an extensive review and development of the DASH system to modernise the NSWCHS state-wide knockout applications and results, as well as developing online applications for teacher officials and consent forms for participants.
- Developed surveys via Google forms to distribute to participants and families post state championships. Data gathered will be used to assess and validate processes used.
- Distributed zone grants to encourage physical activity and 'return to play'.

231 Schools **79,902** Students

- Hosted two successful NSWCHS Championships in Term 1 - girls' softball and boys' volleyball (only three championships were held state-wide in 2020 due to COVID-19). These involved over **250** students and **30** school-based staff.
- Created and tested an online apparel shop that will be available to all Sydney North representatives in 2021.

227 Schools **105,016** Students

- Recommenced two CHS knockout competitions of 14 years T20 boys' and girls' cricket and 15 years and 19 years boys' and girls' beach volleyball, with modifications to meet COVID Safe Guidelines. **28** high schools and over **150** teams participated.
- Purchased and distributed licensed copies of the latest Meet Manager swimming program for all **8** affiliated primary and high school zones.

232 Schools **40,802** Students

Representative School Sport Pathway

- Shifted the SSWSSA Yearbook to an online document to enhance accessibility.
- Presented the benefits of this pathway to three principal networks within the Association, showcasing the importance of school sport in the curriculum.
- Conducted forums with zone representatives, principals and directors, encouraging collaboration to increase sporting opportunities for students.

201 Schools
87,493 Students

- Conducted a rigorous financial review of the accounts and processes using the 2020 updated SSU Association Financial Guidelines and Operating Procedures guide.
- Implemented the latest online business solutions for banking and accounting, enabling a simpler experience for representatives and efficiencies for staff.

231 Schools **62,447** Students

- Distributed grants to all affiliated primary and secondary zones to kick-start participation initiatives after the easing of COVID restrictions, particularly focusing on students with disability.
- Pioneered a successful primary girls' Australian football trial program with Mackillop PSSA in Wagga which led to a state-wide representative pathway roll-out.

178 Schools
20,445 Students

- Implemented online DASH system to collect manager/ convenor applications and consent forms for representative teams.
- Conducted primary boys' and girls' basketball, and secondary girls' softball gala days in Term 4, in line with COVID restrictions.·
- Provided funding for children with special needs to attend Disability Inclusion days, and gala days in Term 4.

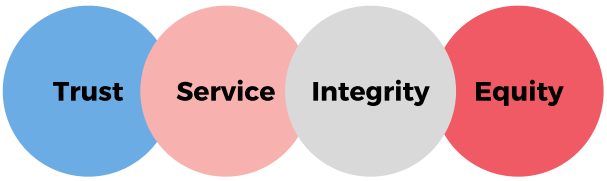
152 Schools
18,046 Students

- Conducted **21** secondary gala days in **10** sports across Orange, Dubbo, Bathurst, Parkes and Cowra in term 4 all with sport-specific COVID safe plans and practices.
- Developed WSSA Strategic Plan 2020-23 in consultation with Western primary and secondary executives.
- Delivered an online mentoring system that was available to all Western executive mentors and conveners/managers.

189 Schools
26,659 Students

Disability and participation

A diverse range of physical activity and modified sport opportunities are offered to provide greater accessibility and engagement for all students. These promote the social, emotional and physical benefits of sport and physical activity in competitive and non-competitive environments.



Disability

The SSU is committed to developing and implementing inclusive sport and physical activity opportunities and pathways for students with disability across NSW. These focus on ability, participation, enjoyment and skill development. Opportunities include gala days, multi-sport days, knockouts and come-and-try days, and are available for students with disabilities who are in special school settings, support units and also for integrated students.

In 2020, two Disabilities Inclusion Officer positions were created to provide increased opportunities, focusing on two of the four areas identified in the Disability Strategy; strengthening support for teachers and support staff, and increasing resources and flexibility.

Events resumed in Term 4 in line with the easing of COVID restrictions. **21** events were held state wide, including multi-sport days, boccia and ten pin bowling.

1,800+
Students attended events

151
Schools represented



Key achievements to date include:

- Created a database of **5,200+** school-based, disability-specific contacts.
- Published a suite of disability-specific videos and resources.
- Developed the disability and participation section of the SSU website.
- Provided support and guidance for the representative school sport pathway.
- Increased understanding of sport and physical activity opportunities for students with disability across schools and the broader community.
- Collaborated with Edith Cowan University to research best practice in inclusive physical activity and sport and to highlight gaps within our educational system.



Moving forward, the SSU remains committed to increasing inclusive sport opportunities in 2021, with plans to offer various state-wide programs. This includes **20** multi-sport days, **14** come-and-try athletics, the expansion of the boccia knockout championship, sport-specific gala days and the creation of new sport/s in the knockout format.

To further increase engagement and participation, pilot programs in collaboration with different sporting bodies will be developed and introduced, as well as existing teacher professional learning opportunities reviewed to make them accessible via online platforms or in a new blended format (online and face-to-face) for future delivery.

Participation

Participation programs provide additional sport and physical activity opportunities for students attending primary and secondary public schools. The SSU offers a variety of competitive and non-competitive opportunities to encourage participation by all students.

These contemporary programs support the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing of all students as outlined in The School Excellence Framework – Learning Element - Wellbeing.

Events planned for 2020 were put on hold due to the restrictions relating to COVID-19. Planning for 2021 will include a range of events for students from around the state.

NSW Premier's Sporting Challenge



To promote increased participation in sport and physical activity, leading to healthier, more active lifestyles, the Premier's Sporting Challenge (PSC) is offered to students and teachers across the state. This multi-faceted program includes a range of initiatives to support schools with the implementation of the Sport and Physical Activity Policy, specifically in complying with the mandated 150 minutes of planned weekly physical activity.

"The Challenge continues to meet its aim of having more students and staff more active, more often."

10 week Challenge

Available to students, school staff and corporate staff. It involves daily tracking of physical activity over a 10 week period. In 2020, even with the disruption of COVID-19, the 10 week Challenge maintained its total participation with **462,322** participants.

445,113	17,209	1,459
Students	Staff	Schools

Additional 10 week Challenge resources were developed in response to COVID-19, including:

- **PSC Tracker app**
  The app was re-developed into a web app making it widely accessible to students and staff from any device.
- **Digital logbooks and certificates**
  New digital resources were developed to assist teachers to facilitate the 10 week Challenge whilst students were learning from home. These included digital student and staff logbooks and PSC@Home certificates.
- **GetActive@Home**
  In support of home learning, a series of digital resources (episodes and lesson guides) were produced to keep students active. These had over **40,000** views and generated significant positive media attention.

Race Around Australia

This virtual physical activity initiative was trialled in **45** schools and **44** DoE corporate offices. In 2021, this program will be offered to schools as an alternative, or in addition to the 10 week Challenge.

3,855	488
Students	Staff

NSW Premier's Sporting Challenge

Sport Leadership program

Communities of schools collaborate to implement a leadership development program for NSW students across Stages 3-6. In 2019/2020, there were **78** secondary schools involving **1,600** students who formed Leading with Action networks. Each network collaborated with national and state sporting organisations to provide sport-specific leadership training for their selected students. Unfortunately, most secondary students did not have the opportunity to hone these skills, due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on the Learning to Lead program.

Awards and Recognition

The PSC has a range of strategies to recognise and reward the sporting effort and achievements of students and teachers in NSW public schools.

- **332,000 PSC 10 week Challenge certificates** sent to schools and department offices to recognise individual or class achievement.
- **2,840 PSC Student Ambassadors** in recognition of primary school students in the 10 week Challenge who actively assist their school to promote physical activity and sport.
- **2,450 PSC Student Medals** which recognise outstanding student commitment to sport and physical activity.
- **11 Excellent Service to School Sport Awards and 10 Certificate of Recognition awards** given to teachers who have displayed an outstanding commitment and contribution to sport and physical activity.

Partnerships

The PSC partners with universities, government agencies, national and state sporting bodies and other institutions to support schools in the delivery of quality sport and physical activity, The aim is to develop research-based strategies and resources for staff to assist them in the implementation of the Sport and Physical Activity Policy. The PSC team also collaborates with these bodies to develop and implement other teacher professional learning opportunities.



School Swimming and Water Safety Program

Excellence

Trust

Equity

The NSW Department of Education funds a learn-to-swim and water safety education program for primary school students in Years 2-6 who are unable to swim 25 metres. This intensive program aims to develop water confidence and provides students with basic skills in water safety and survival.

Schools can access the program for their students through different delivery models, designed to meet their needs in the local context. Opportunities are also provided for students in Schools for Specific Purposes and Intensive English Centres.

COVID-19 disrupted the application cycle for 2020/2021, resulting in **101,000** students from **1,300** schools being unable to attend the program. Prior to its cessation, **7,223** students from **107** schools were able to participate in the program in Term 1. A further **46,995** students from **704** schools received funding to resume the school-based program in Term 4.

Planning is underway to recommence full operations in 2021, and the development of an alternate 5-day water safety program for all students regardless of swimming ability will also be introduced. Each program will be mapped to curriculum outcomes and teaching resources, and schools will choose the program type that best suits their needs.



46,995
Students from

704
Schools

Received funding for the school-based program in Term 4

Policy and guidelines



Advice is available to support teachers and schools in offering high quality, safe and enjoyable sport and physical activity for students.

The SSU oversees the Sport and Physical Activity Policy and Guidelines. A wide range of support is offered to schools to ensure the requirements are being addressed, and helping to clarify what schools can and cannot do when offering sports and physical activities.

57

Sport and physical activities documented

More specifically, the Sport Safety Guidelines support schools in meeting the mandatory sport and physical activity requirement of 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity across the school week. They also assist schools in developing appropriate risk assessments for sport and physical activity, including advice about duty of care, supervision, qualifications, safety equipment, infection control and weather conditions.

COVID-19 requirements in schools have specific reference to sport and physical activity and the SSU has played a crucial role in assisting/ consulting schools as they navigate these requirements.

The Sport Policy Advisor works in collaboration with Health and Safety regarding enquiries related to Principal Endorsed Activities. System development is underway in conjunction with Health and Safety to capture data associated with schools' enquiries to help inform future support.

267

COVID policy email enquiries supported

Trust **Service** **Integrity** **Accountability**

Teacher professional learning

To develop confident and competent teachers in sport and physical activity, the SSU provides a diverse range of teacher professional learning (TPL). These NESA accredited workshops provide the knowledge and resources to support the planning and delivery of quality sport and physical activity for students. Workshop delivery models include face-to-face, online, or a combination of both.

In 2020, the TPL team worked with state and national sporting organisations to adapt existing workshops and to incorporate more online learning opportunities. Moving forward, the TPL team will continue to adapt delivery methods in 2021 to ensure teachers can gain the skills and knowledge necessary to enhance learning opportunities and physical activity for their students.

7

Online workshops offered

Various partnerships exist between the SSU and universities. These aim to develop evidence-based TPL to support schools in the implementation of the Sport and Physical Activity Policy, specifically in strategies to meet the mandated 150 minutes of weekly planned physical activity. Recent partnerships include Thinking while Moving, Burn 2 Learn, iPLAY, Resistance Training for Teens and Physical Activity for Everyone.

> Important and relevant learning for schools that demonstrates a strong correlation between school and departmental priorities...This course has been robustly assessed against the rubric and has the potential to provide high quality professional learning for the participants.
> **- Quality Assurance Panel**

The SSU is supporting schools in the completion of their Situational Analysis and development of their Strategic Improvement Plans. This is achieved by enhancing the skills and knowledge of school leaders to evaluate wellbeing programs and understand the interconnection between sport, physical activity and wellbeing. Participants engage in an initial two hour presentation where they are guided through applying a whole school evidence-based approach towards sport and physical activity, with follow up support also offered over the four-year School Excellence cycle.

100+

Schools supported

Trust

Service



Integrity

Accountability



Contact us

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