School Sport Unit

Term 4 2023 Newsletter

Dear colleagues

With Term 4 well under way, I'm sure everyone is busy with reports, end-of-year activities and planning for 2024.

I wish to acknowledge and thank principals and school staff who have actively supported our programs throughout the year. Your dedication, passion and commitment in supporting students to meet the mandatory physical activity requirements – whether through our swimming and water safety program, increased participation in school-based programs, or the Representative School Sport Pathway, is commendable.

Participating in physical activities fosters character development, promotes a healthy lifestyle, develops positive attitudes, and demonstrates benefits in terms of improved academic performance, school attendance and enhanced resilience. Research underscores the undeniable link between physical activity and positive wellbeing outcomes for students.

In our Term 3 newsletter, we invited teachers and principals to nominate their colleagues for a School Sport Unit award. It was really pleasing to hear those nominations increased by over 300% from 2022 to 2023.

The recipients of these awards will be announced on Thursday 7 December at 6:30 pm. We invite you to watch the live broadcast of the ceremony via School Sport Unit: School Sport Unit Awards Ceremony.

I encourage you to take a moment to read the updates, opportunities and announcements covering all School Sport Unit programs.

Peter Banks
Leader, School Sport Unit

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Policy and Guidelines

Swimming and water safety

With summer approaching, many schools will attend one of our swimming and water safety programs in Term 4.

Teams all over the state are delivering lessons to hundreds of schools as students participate in either the 5-day Water Safety Program or the 10-day Swimming and Water Safety Program.

It's an important time of the year to raise safety awareness for students as summer approaches and more time is spent in and around aquatic settings.

Applications for the 2023/2024 season open in Term 1 2024. If your school missed the application timeframe for the current season, it's not too late to be included. Please contact schoolswimming@det.nsw.edu.au to submit a late application.

Be qualified as a swim teacher

The Swim Teacher License is a requirement for teachers instructing in school initiated learn-to-swim programs to comply with the department's Sport Safety Guidelines for swimming and water safety. Swim teacher workshops are provided by RLSSA, AUSTSWIM and SCTA (Swim Coaches and Teachers Australia) and include the Perform Basic Water Rescues competency.

The School Sport Unit will reimburse schools up to $300 for the cost of a swim teacher qualification for the remainder of 2023 and will provide relief costs for teachers who attend a swim teacher course on a school day. Please complete the relief payment and reimbursement form.

Classroom resources – Let's be water safe

Schools are encouraged to access classroom resources that support practical lessons with a variety of water safety lessons. Support materials can be used in the classroom, delivered as standalone units of learning or in conjunction with attendance at a School Swimming and Water Safety Program.

Are you planning an end-of-year activity for your students involving aquatic activities?

The swimming and water safety guidelines provide key information and risk assessments to assist school communities in the planning of safe swimming experiences for students at a variety of locations. The supervision ratios and qualifications are shown in the Aquatic supervision summary table. Schools can also use the Considerations when choosing an aquatic activity for more information on structured versus unstructured aquatic activities.

From 2024 onwards, Perform Basic Water Rescue will be cited in the Sport Safety Guidelines as the new minimum qualification for at least one supervising teacher.

This new minimum standard is not an additional qualification, it's an easier qualification to obtain and maintain, in comparison to the previous minimum, but still delivers the critical information and skills.

The Perform Basic Water Rescue qualification is achieved through 2 hours of online learning and a one-hour practical assessment. For the remainder of 2023, the School Sport Unit is reimbursing course costs for all department staff who complete the Perform Basic Water Rescue qualification. For more information refer to Swimming and Water Safety.

Also coming in 2024, a compulsory online awareness-raising professional learning course for supervising teachers. The course will focus on recognising a person in difficulty in the water and will provide guidance on incident response procedures.

Be prepared for your swimming carnival

While swimming carnivals are generally considered a structured aquatics activity, appropriate supervision is still required. At least one staff member must have a suitable rescue competency. However, this is requirement can be waived if a qualified lifeguard is present and is supervising the school activities exclusively.

Suitable qualifications that include the rescue competencies are:

- Royal Life Saving Society Perform Basic Water Rescue accreditation
- Any pool lifeguard qualification
- Bronze medallion (open and still water)
- Any of the learn to swim qualifications.

Work with us

The School Swimming and Water Safety team is always keen to hear from teachers interested in being part of the team to deliver our programs on a regular basis. For more information, refer to Work with us.

Recognising and responding to concussion

Is concussion included in your school's First Aid Plan?

Home and school are the most common places for a concussion to occur.

The Recognising and responding to concussion e-learning course supports teachers, support staff and school leaders to recognise concussion and respond to a suspected concussion, in line with department procedures.

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New 'Playbook' Resource Coming Soon

A forthcoming suite of documents, referred to as 'the Playbook' will assist principals, school business managers and department staff in collaborating with sports clubs, including instances where sports clubs wish to engage in elite sporting programs with schools. This is not intended for use when schools are using state/national sporting bodies to support educational programs, for example through the Sporting Schools grant funding.

The Playbook will assist schools that receive sports program proposals from sports clubs, which are typically sports organisations that field sports teams in elite competitions (for example, football clubs, rugby clubs, netball clubs, golf clubs).

Developed to enable schools to offer students access to elite sporting programs, the Playbook includes crucial safeguards like compliance with Working with Children

Check requirements. It also ensures that all decisions concerning students remain within the purview of schools and students' parents/carers.

One of the initial support documents in the Playbook, known as 'Ground Rules' outlines the department's non-negotiable prerequisites, encompassing Working with Children Checks, insurance, publicity, advertising and cyber security. This document should be provided to sports clubs at the outset of the process to ensure their awareness of the department's baseline requirements.

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NSW Premier's Sporting Challenge

The Premier's Sporting Challenge (PSC) concludes another year of high levels of participation!

This year 1,354 schools participated including 428,011 primary and secondary students and 12,564 staff, making 2023 one of the biggest years yet. Congratulations to all schools who completed the PSC 10 week Challenge (10wC). Thank you to all PSC Facilitators, teachers and Principals for their support in running the program and promoting the PSC ethos of more students, more active, more often.

Many schools will be receiving Gold and Diamond awards for the 10wC. Certificates will be dispatched to schools during Term 4. Schools are reminded to submit their 10wC awards in the PSC Tracker.

For assistance, visit How to run the 10wC or contact the PSC team.

PSC Student Medal

PSC Student Medals have been dispatched to schools and were addressed to the main PSC facilitator or principal. If your school has not received your medal/s or you require a replacement medal, please email psc@det.nsw.edu.au.

The PSC Student Medal certificate is available for download and print to accompany the medal presentation. Visit PSC Student Medal for more information.

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Representative School Sport

The Term 4 representative school sport calendar is filled with a range of sporting events and Association activities as we close out a highly successful year in representative sport. During the latter half of Term 3, the NSW Combined High Schools Sports Association held its annual Secondary State Athletics Championship at the Sydney Athletic Centre. Some intermittent rain did not limit the outstanding student performances that were on show across the championship.

The secondary state Athletics convener, Mr Ian Hinton, from Oran Park High School commented, "This event is such a highlight of the NSW Combined High Schools Sports Association events calendar. We bring over 2,000 students, 4,000 spectators and more than 100 teachers from across the state together so that events like this can occur. We see students who specialise in either running, jumping, throwing or walking events, while others have talents across multiple disciplines. We are also seeing a high standard of competition, where students competing at this championship, have recently represented at international level in the community pathway. There was also a total of 7 records broken in track and field events across the championship."

The event was also live streamed through the School Sport Unit YouTube Channel, which has already attracted over 33,000 views. If you missed the action, watch a replay on our YouTube channel.

School Sports Associations' Annual General Meetings

During Term 4, School Sports Associations will hold their Annual General Meetings (AGMs) to appoint Association Office Bearers for 2024, including executive, convener, coach and manager roles. Post-AGM, some associations may have vacant positions, offering a chance for staff to apply in a second round.

Staff interested in undertaking one of these roles, should contact the Executive Officer of their school's affiliated School Sports Association. For details of the Executive Officer contact details for each association, refer to Representative school sport.

Primary Principal's Association – School Sport Conference

In Week 9 of Term 3, 37 Principals from each of the Primary Principal Councils attended a state school sport conference hosted by the School Sport Unit. The insights, strategies and legal requirements offered valuable support to principals and staff, enhancing the role of physical activity and school sport. The conference primarily focused on student wellbeing, engagement and fostering a positive school culture through physical activity. Positive feedback was received from the event, and there is a plan to involve Secondary Principal colleagues through representation on the Secondary Principal Council in 2024.

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Disability and Inclusion

In Term 4, Multi-sport events will be held across the Hunter, North Coast and Sydney regions. These days offer students and staff the chance to experience sports in a modified and adapted format to meet their needs. For more information and to register your school visit Participation Opportunities.

The School Sport Unit Tenpin Bowling State Finals were held this week, with over 60 schools competing for glory. Congratulations to Moss Vale Public School for winning the primary school competition and Orange High School for winning the secondary competition.

The inaugural Representative Boccia Tournament takes place in Week 6 with some of the best Boccia players from around NSW coming together to compete at Sydney Olympic Park. This is an exciting new addition to our programs, offering a chance for students to be recognised for their talent and to represent at a higher level within the school sporting system.

The 2024 Disability and Inclusion event calendar will be available online by Week 6, listing all the wonderful opportunities on offer next year. Make sure you check it out and add dates to your school calendar so don't forget what's planned. Registrations will also open for the Tenpin Bowling and Boccia competitions as well. For more information visit Participation Opportunities.

If you would like to join the distribution list to receive Disability and Inclusion information, please email InclusiveSchoolSport@det.nsw.edu.au.

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Sport and physical activity professional learning

Students who are physically active tend to have better grades, increased school attendance, greater cognitive performance and improved behaviour, engagement and vitality. The Teacher resource hub contains a range of sport and physical activity resources to support teachers in delivering quality learning experiences for students.

Professional learning courses include:

- Burn 2 Learn – a research informed program for senior students
- Game-based learning in sport and physical activity
- Introduction to cycling

For more information, refer to Online professional learning.

Term 4 Professional learning workshops

The School Sport Unit – School sport and physical activity workshop supports teachers to successfully integrate physical activity across the school day to increase student physical activity levels. Participants in the workshop will deepen their understanding of physically active English and mathematics lessons, classroom energisers and delivery of quality school sport.

Enrol in one of the workshops below through MyPL.

- Monday 13 November, Department of Education Parramatta Office
- Friday 10 November, Tamworth Public School
- Wednesday 22 November, Sportz Central Coffs Harbour

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Finding the potential and developing the talent of students in the physical domain

The High Potential and Gifted Education policy defines 4 domains of potential, including the physical domain. These domains apply to all students from all backgrounds.

The physical domain of potential refers to natural abilities in muscular movement and motor control. The physical domain discussion paper provides an overview of the research and evidence-based practices to more equitably find the potential (including high potential) of your students, and optimally develop their talent in the physical domain. Use the physical domain discussion paper to promote professional conversations between school leaders and between teachers.

Interested in more equitably finding the potential of your students in the physical domain and not just identifying their performance? Complete the HPGE Tier 2 Professional Learning Course 1 – Finding High Potential.

Interested in more effectively developing the talent of your students in the physical domain? Complete the HPGE Tier 2 Professional Learning Course 2 – Evidence-based talent development.

For more advice on professional learning and resources supporting the High Potential and Gifted Education policy email hpge@det.nsw.edu.au.

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Bring an Olympian to your Sydney primary school

Olympics Unleashed is launching into primary schools across metro Sydney from this term.

Currently available to Year 9 students and regional primary schools across NSW, this is the first time Sydney-based primary students will have the opportunity for an Olympics Unleashed visit in their classroom. The program is free for schools, with your students learning directly from athletes about how to set goals, overcome challenges and follow their passion to reach their own personal best.

Rolling out in a staggered approach, Olympics Unleashed will be available to schools in Sydney's West this term, followed by Sydney's South West, North and East in Terms 1-3 next year.

Find out more and register at Olympics Unleashed.

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