NSW Education

School Sport Unit newsletter

Term 4 2024

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Dear colleagues

As we dive into Term 4, I hope this message finds you well amidst the busyness of reports, end-of-year activities and planning for 2025.

I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt thanks to all principals and school staff who have actively supported our programs throughout the year. Your dedication, passion and commitment to helping students 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–are truly commendable.

Engaging in physical activities not only fosters character development but also promotes a healthy lifestyle, cultivates positive attitudes and shows benefits in improved academic performance, school attendance and enhanced resilience. Research clearly highlights the strong connection between physical activity and positive wellbeing outcomes for our students.

In our Term 3 newsletter, we invited teachers and principals to nominate their colleagues for a School Sport Unit award. Thank you to everyone who participated and submitted their nominations. Your engagement is greatly appreciated.

We will announce the award recipients on Thursday 12 December at 6:30 pm. I encourage you to join us for the broadcast of the ceremony via School Sport Unit Awards Ceremony.

Please take a moment to read through the updates, opportunities and announcements covering all School Sport Unit programs. Your continued support makes a significant difference in our students' lives.

Regards

Peter Banks
Leader, School Sport Unit

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Swimming and water safety

70 years of swimming and water safety

The School Swimming and Water Safety Program began with a small number of students in 1954 and has grown to become an essential part of the curriculum for over 142,000 students annually. It continues to adapt to meet the needs of today's diverse student body, including provision of water safety education for students with disability and those new to Australia.

Water safety message for this summer

As we head into the summer months, it is critical to reinforce the importance of water safety. Now is the perfect time to help students ensure they stay safe around water by promoting the program's Classroom resources.

These 'Let's be water safe' resources have been designed to complement swimming lessons and teach 5 key safety topics:

- how to stay safe in and around water
- personal safety
- aquatic settings
- personal survival
- rescue techniques.

Swimming and Water Safety Programs

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.

Keep an eye on Staff Noticeboard for updates on when registrations for Term 3 and 4 of 2025 open for the School Swimming and Water Safety Program. If your school is not yet registered for Term 1 or 2 2025, it's not too late. To apply, please contact schoolswimming@det.nsw.edu.au.

Work with us

The School Sport Unit is always looking for teachers who are interested in being teachers on the School Swimming and Water Safety program. For more information, refer to Work with us.

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Policy and guidelines

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 (PDF 93 KB). Schools can also use the Considerations when choosing an aquatic activity (PDF 95 KB) for more information on structured versus unstructured aquatic activities.

Perform basic water rescue accreditation is the minimum qualification required to supervise swimming activities according to the Sport safety guidelines. The perform basic water rescue qualification is achieved through 2 hours of online learning and a one-hour practical assessment. For more information, refer to Swimming and water safety.

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 departmental procedures

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Premier’s Sporting Challenge (PSC)

The 2024 PSC 10 week Challenge (10wC) has officially concluded with outstanding participation, surpassing last year’s final numbers. A massive 1,469 schools and Education support office teams took part this year, with 431,370 primary and secondary student and 14,760 staff participants.

Congratulations to everyone who completed the10wC. Thank you to all PSC facilitators, teachers and principals for your invaluable support in promoting the PSC ethos of getting students and staff more active, more often.

Many schools will receive 10wC Gold and Diamond award certificates for their outstanding commitment to the challenge, recognising their dedication to staying active and promoting healthier lifestyles and overall wellbeing throughout the program.

An amazing 360 schools have already received their End-of-Challenge certificates, with approximately another 800 schools due to receive them in Week 8 – if they submitted their final awards by Thursday 24 October 2024. There will also be a late certificate dispatch arriving in schools early in Week 10.

For assistance with submission, refer to Submitting final 10 week Challenge (10wC) awards in the PSC Tracker (PDF 1,435 KB). For reprint or replacement certificates, please email psc@det.nsw.edu.au.

PSC student recognition

In 2024 over 3,650 students were appointed as their school’s PSC Student Ambassador – a leadership role promoting active behaviours and programs in the school. Schools can further recognise these students with a PSC Student Ambassador Certificate of Appreciation (PDF 133 KB).

Soon, over 3,000 public school students will be awarded a PSC Student Medal for their outstanding commitment and contribution to sport and physical education programs in their school. The PSC Student Medal certificate (PDF 86 KB) is available for downloading and printing to accompany the medal presentation

Visit PSC Student Medal for more information. If your school has not received your medal/s or you require a replacement medal, please email psc@det.nsw.edu.au

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Representative school sport

Primary State Athletics Championship

The Term 4 Representative School Sport Pathway calendar is filled with many exciting events as we close out another highly successful year in representative sport. Early in the term, the NSW Primary Schools Sports Association (NSWPSSA) held its annual Athletics Championship at the Sydney Olympic Park Athletic Centre. The beautiful weather brought some outstanding performances and memorable experiences enjoyed by the student participants.

The event attracted 2,200 students and over 4,500 spectators from across NSW. There was a range of stand-out athletes, with multiple students achieving first place in 2 or more events. There were also 8 able-bodied records broken and 76 new multiclass standards set or existing records broken.

Student commentators

The 2024 NSWPSSA Athletics Championship featured the School Sport Unit’s first introduction of secondary student commentators to its live-streamed coverage. This pilot initiative was designed to support students who may have an interest in pursuing a career in media, television presenting or sports commentary. Over the 2 days of the championship, a group of secondary students was mentored by experienced commentators as they developed ‘on-the-job’ skills in sports commentary. Each student gained confidence at their own pace, as they called the live action for both track and field events. This model not only broadened the appeal of the event but also introduced secondary students to an alternative involvement in sports, highlighting a career pathway that can deepen their connection to sport beyond direct competition.

Student commentators working trackside.

Three of our student commentators covering the athletics championships.

Two student commentators working with a commentator mentor.

Student commentators preparing to commentate for the long jump.

The live stream of the event has already attracted over 80,000 views. If you missed the action, access the replay through our School Sport Unit live stream gallery.

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 2025, 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 each association’s executive officer contact details, refer to Representative school sport.

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Disability and inclusion

In Term 4, multi-sport events will be held across the North Coast, Hunter and Sydney regions. These events 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, refer to Participation opportunities.

The School Sport Unit Tenpin Bowling State Finals were held in Week 3 this term, with 60 schools travelling from all over NSW to compete. Congratulations to Evans River Central School for winning the primary division and Orange High School for winning the secondary competition.

Our Representative Boccia Tournament also took place in this week, with 58 of the best Boccia players from NSW public schools coming together to compete at Sydney Olympic Park. Students played in both individual and team events, displaying a high level of skill and unrivalled enthusiasm. Paralympians Jamieson Leeson and Dan Michel were also on hand to offer advice, encouragement and answer questions about their silver medal wins in France earlier this year.

The 2025 disability and inclusion event calendar will be available online by Week 7, listing all the wonderful opportunities on offer next year. Make sure you check it out and add dates to your school calendar for next year. Registrations will also open for the tenpin bowling and boccia competitions as well. For more information, refer to 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 and improved cognitive performance, 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.

Swimming carnival support

Are you planning your swimming carnival for 2025? The School sport carnivals webpage offers a comprehensive range of resources to assist with every aspect of planning and delivering a successful school swimming carnival for all students, including students with disability.

You'll find the newly updated School swimming carnival safety guide (PDF 1.3 MB), which includes essential information on supervision requirements, necessary qualifications, supervision tips, water rescue procedures and guidelines for dive entries.

Explore these resources to ensure a safe and enjoyable event for everyone.

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Bring an Olympian to your school

Olympics Unleashed takes Olympians and aspiring Olympians into Australian schools across NSW to inspire and motivate students to be their personal best. Help your students find their passion, learn about setting goals, overcoming challenges and building resilience through this unique program.

Over 1,000 schools were visited in NSW, allowing more than 134,000 young students to come face to face with Olympians in their classroom.

For more information and to register today, refer to Olympics Unleashed – NSW schools.

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AUSTRALIA
OLYMPICS UNLEASHED
NSW GOVERNMENT
Saya Sakakibara
Cycling
OLYMPICS UNLEASHED
Bring an Olympian to your school!
▸ Free for schools
▸ Inspiring students
#OlympicsUnleashed

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