NSW GOVERNMENT Education

School Sport Unit newsletter

Term 2 2025

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Dear colleagues

As we move into the heart of Term 2, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the incredible commitment of our school communities that support student wellbeing through quality sport and physical activity programs. Across NSW, schools continue to create environments where all students can connect, challenge themselves and thrive through sport.

This term is already shaping up to be one of opportunity and innovation. From our live streamed state championships to inclusive sporting pathways and streamlined processes for school registrations, the School Sport Unit remains focused on ensuring every student has access to meaningful and memorable sporting experiences.

None of this would be possible without the ongoing dedication of our teachers. Whether you're organising a local carnival, mentoring a knockout team or supporting representative events, your work is the engine behind every success story. Thank you for everything you do to make sport and physical activity a valued part of school life.

This newsletter is packed with updates, supporting resources and details about nominating a colleague for recognition in the 2025 School Sport Unit Awards. I encourage you to explore the opportunities offered by the School Sport Unit and to continue sharing your experiences with us.

Regards

Lucette King
R/Leader, School Sport Unit

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2025 School Sport Unit Awards

The School Sport Unit is looking forward to broadcasting this year's School Sport Unit Awards on Thursday 11 December 2025 (Term 4, Week 9). The awards aim to recognise colleagues around the state who consistently support our students to achieve their best through sport and physical activity. Nominations will be open from Monday 21 July 2025 (Term 3, Week 1).

Visit School Sport Unit Awards Ceremony for more information.

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Support for school athletics carnivals

The School Sport Unit has developed a comprehensive athletics officiating teacher resource to support teachers in convening and officiating school athletics carnivals. It helps deliver safe, fair and consistent athletics events across NSW public schools. Designed for both primary and high schools, the resource aligns with the events, distances and implement weights used in the NSW Combined High Schools Sports Association (CHS) and NSW Primary Schools Sports Association (PSSA) representative athletics pathways, ensuring consistency in school carnivals through to state level.

The online resource includes videos, diagrams and step-by-step guides for officiating both track and field events. Whether you're new to officiating or looking to refresh your knowledge, the resource covers everything from starting procedures and timing to measuring techniques and safety considerations for events like high jump, shot put and javelin.

Visit the Athletics officiating teacher resource to explore the full suite of tools and help ensure your school athletics events are run confidently, accurately and in line with current sport safety guidelines.

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SSU teacher online professional learning

The School Sport Unit offers a range of online workshops designed to help schools deliver high-quality sport and physical activity experiences for all students. These workshops are available through MyPL and cover a variety of practical topics to support teacher confidence and program delivery.

You can explore the full list of available workshops School Sport Unit online professional learning.

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NSW School Sport Games 2025

The NSW School Sport Games (the Games) are being held this week from Monday 2 June to Friday 6 June 2025 at the Blacktown International Sports Park precinct and will involve students, families and staff from 15 NSW School Sport Associations. Over 2,000 primary and secondary student athletes will compete in 9 sports with 12 NSW State Champions determined. The Games will also include the inaugural Ten Pin Bowling State Championship for students with disability. This event aims to provide students, teachers, schools, School Sport Associations and the wider community with the opportunity to celebrate sporting and educational achievements. The focus of the Games is on the importance of participating in school sport, building resilience, connection, and the important role sport and physical activity plays in wellbeing.

All the best to all students and teachers involved.

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Live streaming representative events

The School Sport Unit continues to live stream a number of state championship events. The NSW Combined High Schools Sports Association and NSW Primary Schools Sports Association Championships' streams are consistently receiving strong interest and engagement by our school sport community.

You can access the schedule of these events at School Sport Unit live streaming. This provides an excellent opportunity for students, teachers and families to follow the representative school sport experience of their peers and their children and to cheer them on from anywhere in the world. The streams for this year's scheduled events and the archive of previously streamed events can be accessed through the new School Sport Unit video gallery.

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Duke of Ed pilot in NSW public schools

In Term 4 2024, the department launched a new pilot program funded by The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Australia. The pilot is being implemented in 11 targeted public schools across south-west Sydney, with the goal of increasing equitable access to the Bronze Level Award.

While the pilot involves a small number of schools, it marks an important step in exploring how the Award can be more effectively scaled in public secondary schools, especially in low socio-economic status school communities.

Key elements of the pilot include:

- development of school-based delivery models with enhanced staff training and support
- development of resources and training to support school-based delivery
- exploration of new financial support models to ensure equitable access
- improved probity processes developed in collaboration with the department's Probity team, including a new guidance flowchart and updated web content to support schools in meeting compliance requirements.

Please note: If your school is not part of the pilot, continue to engage with the Office of Sport through your usual channels for the Duke of Ed. If you have information, feedback, or questions that may help inform the pilot's success, we'd love to hear from you. For more information, contact: dukeofed@det.nsw.edu.au.

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Opportunities for students with disability

The School Sport Unit's boccia competition is now underway, with over 600 teams from across NSW competing for the title of state champions. The tournament has seen an approximate 20% increase in school participation since last year and continues to be one of the largest and fastest-growing school sporting events in the state.

This term also sees the continuation of the first year of representative ten pin bowling, with the representative tournament to be held in Rooty Hill during the NSW School Sport Games. Last term, more than 100 students with disability trialled for a place in this exciting new event.

Come-and-Try events were also held in Week 2, including tennis in Bathurst and Australian football in Blacktown and Ryde, giving students with disability the opportunity to experience and engage with new sports in a supportive environment.

Looking ahead, multi-sport events will take place across the state in Terms 3 and 4. To find out more and register, visit Disability and Inclusion participation opportunities.

Multi-class events allow students with disability to compete in representative cross country, athletics and swimming. Students must have a current sporting classification to take part. To learn more and access the forms, visit Classification and Multi-class.

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School swimming and water safety

Bookings now open for Term 1 and 2, 2026

Bookings are now open for **central programs in Term 1 and 2, 2026**, as well as for **all school-managed programs in Term 3 and 4, 2025**, and **Term 1 and 2, 2026**.

Whether your school delivers its own program or takes part in a centrally coordinated one, now is the time to secure your preferred dates and locations. Booking early supports smoother timetabling, better resource planning, and ensures students don't miss out on this essential, life-saving program.

We are currently in the final stages of planning for Term 3 and 4, 2025. If your school wishes to register for this time, please contact our office directly to discuss availability.

Visit the registrations page on our website or have any questions, please contact us at schoolswimming@det.nsw.edu.au.

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New pre-registration process for central programs

We've introduced a new pre-registration process to help schools that attend central programs to plan ahead more easily for School Swimming and Water Safety programs.

Starting this year, schools participating in central programs will receive an email toward the end of their swimming program, inviting them to pre-register for the same time and location the following year. This change is designed to streamline planning and help lock in the schedule earlier, making it easier for schools to prepare in advance.

Schools will still have the option to request alternative dates or locations if needed, and we continue to appreciate your flexibility as we work to coordinate the program across the state.

We're excited to make planning for school swimming smoother, more efficient and easier for everyone involved.

Keep an eye on your school inbox and follow the simple steps to confirm your place. For support, contact us at schoolswimming@det.nsw.edu.au.

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Procedures and guidelines

Procedures and guideline support continues to be enhanced this year. This area provides important new information on on-water activity prerequisites and supervision requirements when using external providers.

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On-water activities

Following consultation and feedback, the prerequisite swim test requirement for on-water activities has been updated.

Participating students must demonstrate water confidence by being able to swim 25 metres or keep themselves afloat for 30 seconds. Students may use any swimming stroke or combination of strokes.

Where a designated prerequisite swim test is not feasible schools may use results from the school swimming carnival or the Water Survival Challenge if within 12 months of assessment, or evidence of school swimming carnival participation.

For students who are unable to swim 25 metres independently, an adjustment to the student prerequisite swim test is suitable. These students should be fitted with a life jacket and demonstrate that they are able to remain calm, with neck control while floating in the water with their feet off the bottom.

The use of a life jacket does not negate the need for the prerequisite student swim test.

Schools may seek to have the pre-activity swim test completed as part of a camp, excursion or on the first lesson in a school sport program.

Parent/carer assessment is not acceptable as an alternative to the prerequisite swim test.

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Supervision when using external providers

There has been significant interest in the supervision of students while external providers deliver sport and physical activity. Schools should note the following.

The school always retains the duty of care for students and must ensure that a supervising teacher from the school is present for each class-sized group, regardless of the qualifications of the provider. Duty of care held by the department and the principal (and by extension, the duty of care of departmental officers, including school staff) cannot be transferred to external providers.

The School Sport Unit has clarified the department's position on Supervision when using external providers for sport and physical activity.

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Shine a spotlight on your student Change-Makers

Do you know a student who inspires others, leads with purpose, or brings positive energy into your school community?

The Australian Olympic Change-Maker program is back for its 7th year, celebrating young Australians who embody the Olympic spirit and are making a real difference in their schools and beyond. Over 6,000 students have already been recognised for their leadership, resilience, and community impact.

Nominate up to 2 students from Years 10–12 who are creating positive change, whether through big projects or small acts of positivity. This is your chance to recognise those students who inspire others and are making a difference through their actions.

Nominations are now open to all Australian secondary schools.

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AUSTRALIAN OLYMPIC
CHANGE-MAKER
POWER THE CHANGE

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.