



**NSWPPA**

**New South Wales Primary Principals Association**

1-04/1-05 22-36 Mountain Street Ultimo 2007

[www.nswppa.org.au](http://www.nswppa.org.au)

**STATE COUNCIL ENDORSED POSITION PAPER**

## ***Early Childhood Education Working Party***

**Background  
Information**

The NSWPPA is committed to ensuring that all students in NSW public schools receive quality teaching and learning experiences delivered by highly trained and well supported staff. The NSWPPA is committed to support, empower, advocate and lead primary principals to enact the vision of the NSW Department of Education.

The NSW Plan for Public Education aims to provide opportunities for all and transform lives through learning. The priorities for the coming years outline the commitment of our teachers and schools to provide an outstanding education for every learner. The commitment is that every student learns, grows, and belongs in an equitable and outstanding education system and that all children have the best start in life.

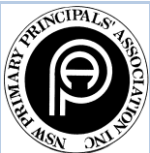
There is a commitment to increase enrolment and participation in preschool for all children by building an additional 100 new public preschools co-located with public primary schools by 2027.

It is the NSW Department of Education's [DOE] intent that public preschools provide:

- educational and developmental services for the most disadvantaged children in the local community
- universal access to high-quality early childhood education in the year prior to school to prepare students for the best start in life and learning.

The DOE Early Childhood Education Directorate has a regulatory responsibility to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in NSW Early Education and Care Services. This responsibility includes monitoring, assessment and rating, the provision of regular feedback, review and enforcement of compliance and approval processes for all services and providers (including public preschools). The PPA has strongly advocated for a substantive Director Early Learning position which has been created and a Director appointed in Term 2 2024.

The DOE currently operates 101 preschools with 133 classes across NSW.



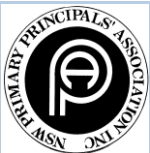
NSWPPA

New South Wales Primary Principals Association

1-04/1-05 22-36 Mountain Street Ultimo 2007

[www.nswppa.org.au](http://www.nswppa.org.au)

	<p>61 preschools are in the Sydney metropolitan area and 40 are in regional and rural areas. 11 preschools are designated specifically for Aboriginal children and another 13 are in Aboriginal communities or in schools where there is a significantly high number of Aboriginal students enrolled. The Department also operates 47 Early Intervention Units for preschool-aged children with disabilities, but these are not under regulatory authority guidelines.</p>
Rationale	<p>The NSWPPA Early Childhood Education Working Party [ECEEWG] recognises that it is the principal who plays a critical role in the successful integration and management of a public preschool.</p> <p>NSW public schools, which currently have a preschool on site, report a range of added complexities to leading and managing their schools. Their experiences suggest that these same complexities will also impact the leadership and staff of the 100 new sites, as well as the students and their families. They will need to be addressed, as detailed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● A public preschool onsite requires principals to navigate the unique and complex challenges and compliances associated with early childhood education including, but not limited to, the hundreds of regulations which support national law and compliance spot checks from the regulatory authority.</li><li>● Principal workload is excessive in leading and managing a preschool alongside a K-6/12 setting, following different regulations/policies. Preschool complexity does not contribute to the complexity loading of schools, meaning principals are not remunerated accordingly.</li><li>● Increasingly complicated preschool National Laws and regulations require significant principal and staff expertise but there is no staffing or executive structure in place to support the principal.</li><li>● Increased number of children in preschools with complex needs but a lack of resourcing/funding to support students and families.</li><li>● Public preschools built in the neediest of communities but are under resourced both financially and in staffing entitlements.</li></ul>
Position	<p><b>Human resources:</b> The NSWPPA's position is that we are seeking allocations in the following:</p> <p>Executive position under entitlement PRESCHOOL specific with the working conditions of a preschool director.</p> <p>School Administration support increase of 0.4 EFT.</p>



NSWPPA

New South Wales Primary Principals Association

1-04/1-05 22-36 Mountain Street Ultimo 2007

[www.nswppa.org.au](http://www.nswppa.org.au)

The inclusion and recognition of the complexity of leading a public Preschool when calculating staffing entitlements for example: - General Assistant - School Counsellor - English as an Additional Language or Dialect teacher - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island staffing - Refugee support - Learning and Support teachers.

As public preschools we should have access to all Department of Education resources including Transition Support Teacher and Early Intervention.

**Workload and Administrative Burden:**

- an increase in human resourcing to alleviate the workload demands of the principal with a dedicated executive under entitlement position to be created in line with other sector Early Childhood services, who have a dedicated room director position – reflecting the leadership required. This is to mitigate the risk to the health and wellbeing of the principal.

**Disability/Inclusion:**

- an increase in the provision of Early Intervention units to support children with complex needs. This includes the establishment of public preschools in Schools for Specific purposes. Which are essential in ensuring all children are afforded early education to achieve true universal access.
- an increase in the number of specialists positions, e.g. Transition Support and early intervention due to the growing needs of students/children with additional learning needs. Early intervention is crucial for equality.

**Professional Learning:**

- the permanent appointment of a dedicated Director, Early Learning, and an increase in the provision of expert Preschool Support officers to equitably offer proactive support rather than the current state of reactive support.

**Equity Entitlements:**

- preschool students enrolled are included in equity funding entitlements so that they receive the funds to ensure a fair, efficient, and transparent allocation of the NSW public education budget for every school. By not including the preschool in the equity funding entitlements, student need is ignored.



**NSWPPA**

**New South Wales Primary Principals Association**

1-04/1-05 22-36 Mountain Street Ultimo 2007

[www.nswppa.org.au](http://www.nswppa.org.au)

	<p><b>School Excellence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>the inclusion of a principal-in-residence and PSL with preschool experience to support principals of schools with a preschool to enhance the overall quality of early childhood education and set the foundation for a successful educational journey for young learners.</li></ul> <p><b>Resource Funding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>adequate funding is needed to cover the cost of the required extensive resources to enable preschools to meet exceeding standards in Quality Assurance Assessment and Rating.</li></ul>
Action	<p>The NSWPPA's actions will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>collecting evidence so that impact can be measured</li><li>committing to strong working relationships with Early Childhood Outcomes Directorate and Early Learning.</li><li>Liaise with the Deputy Secretary and Secretary</li><li>Support, Empower, Advocate and Lead for all primary principals with transition to school programs and public preschools.</li></ul>

State Council Endorsement	Date: 6 September 2024
RG/SC/WP Chair	Kim Smith Chair, Early Childhood Education Working Party
President	Robyn Evans



**NSWPPA**

**New South Wales Primary Principals Association**

1-04/1-05 22-36 Mountain Street Ultimo 2007

[www.nswppa.org.au](http://www.nswppa.org.au)

**APPENDICES:** context for each position.

### **Human resources**

The existing staffing entitlement does not include an executive under entitlement position for leading and managing public preschools.

Currently: Preschools receive an early childhood qualified teacher and a Certificate 3 qualified SLSO per 20 students. Schools receive a 0.2FTE School Administration Officer (SAO) allocation for preschool. Preschool student enrolment numbers are not included in determining equity resources such as school counsellor, Learning and Support, EALD, Refugee support and General Assistant allocations.

Critical to ensuring successful public preschools is a dedicated leadership under entitlement allocation of an AP specifically for the preschool, to adeptly navigate the intricate regulations governing preschool education.

Additionally, there is a need for increased staffing of accredited Special Learning Support Officers (SLSOs) to provide essential support for students with disabilities and cover breaks for existing staff. Furthermore, augmenting school entitlements to facilitate additional School General Assistants is imperative to ensure preschool facilities are meticulously maintained and compliant with safety standards. Moreover, recognising the mounting administrative workload, it's essential to boost the allocation of School Administrative Officers (SAOs), granting them adequate time to efficiently manage administrative tasks. The allocation of school counsellors must encompass preschool student numbers to address the escalating complex needs of students.

General Assistant entitlement does not consider the increased workload having a preschool onsite. A significant amount of time is required to ensure preschool indoor and outdoor environments are safe and compliant to regulatory and legislative requirements of operating a preschool. The PPA supports increased GA entitlement for every preschool unit.

The Principal in Residence and PSL roles are highly significant within the NSW public education system. They involve driving school improvement through sourcing exceptional practice, strategies for building effective relationships, digital tools and school support platforms and targeted professional learning for school-based staff to strengthen student outcomes. P-12 principals benefit from these human resources.

Currently, the antiquated entitlement formula for preschool students registers them as half a student. This does not reflect the demands required for double this amount as each student requires registration, enrolment interviews, transition to school digital statements, health care plans, personalised learning plans, reporting to parent demands. The PPA requires each student attending to be counted as one student for administration purposes.

### **Workload & Administrative Burden**

Currently public schools with preschools face increasing workload and administrative burden regarding enrolment, transition to school statements, health care plans, family communication etc., due by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority requirement (ACECQA) under the National Quality Standard. The NSWPPA's position is that all public schools with preschool receive staffing entitlement, funding allocation, resourcing of administrative support that is commensurate



**NSWPPA**

**New South Wales Primary Principals Association**

1-04/1-05 22-36 Mountain Street Ultimo 2007

[www.nswppa.org.au](http://www.nswppa.org.au)

with the workload and administration that needs to be undertaken to ensure successful preschools. Principal classification includes the complexity loading of leading and managing a public preschool.

### **Disability/Inclusion**

Currently, the only provision for preschool students with a disability are mainstream preschools with insufficient Integration Funding Support or placement in an Early Intervention Unit (EIU) part-time. There is no provision for preschool students in Schools for Specific Purposes (SSPs). EIUs do not receive any specific (resource) funding. The EIU's are a disability resource but should align with Early Learning.

Adequate provisions for preschool students with disabilities is essential to ensure outstanding education for all learners and the success of public preschools. To fully support preschool students with disabilities, there needs to be a variety of provisions to meet the varying needs of students. This includes the provision of preschool enrolments in SSPs, reclassification of Early Intervention Units (EIUs) as preschools, increased number of EIUs, and the employment of additional SLSOs to support students with disabilities in mainstream preschools. A one-size fits all approach is unacceptable. Transition Support Teachers and Early Intervention are essential in supporting preschools to effectively support students with disabilities in preschools.

### **Professional Learning**

Historically, P-2 initiatives officers played a crucial role in supporting professional learning and networking opportunities for preschool staff in NSW. Their expertise, guidance, and tailored support were instrumental in helping public preschools enhance their practices and achieve positive outcomes for children. However, recent changes may have limited access to such valuable resources, underscoring the importance of reinstating and expanding support for professional learning initiatives within the preschool sector.

Professional learning equips educators with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to meet the diverse needs of young learners effectively. In the context of public preschools, where children come from varied backgrounds, the significance of ongoing professional development cannot be overstated.

Professional learning opportunities enable preschool educators to stay abreast of the latest research, methodologies, and best practices in early childhood education. By continuously refining their pedagogical approaches, educators can create enriching learning environments that foster children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.

Professional learning initiatives provide opportunities for preschool staff to collaborate, share insights, and learn from one another. By fostering a culture of collaboration and professional dialogue, public preschools can harness the collective expertise of their educators to enhance teaching practices, problem-solving effectively, and drive continuous improvement across the sector.

Reflective practice lies at the heart of effective teaching and learning. Professional learning encourages educators to engage in reflective practices, critically examining their teaching approaches, assessing student progress, and identifying areas for growth. By fostering a culture of reflection, public preschools can cultivate a cadre of reflective practitioners who are committed to ongoing self-improvement and excellence in their craft.



**NSWPPA**

**New South Wales Primary Principals Association**

1-04/1-05 22-36 Mountain Street Ultimo 2007

[www.nswppa.org.au](http://www.nswppa.org.au)

### **Equity Entitlements**

Currently, preschool students cannot access equity support from SBAR entitlement or budget adjustments, including New Arrivals Program, Refugee Support, EAL/D, Learning Support, school counsellor allocation and General Assistants. Research supports that equity funding is crucial for students as it helps to address disparities and inequalities in educational opportunities and outcomes.

### **School Excellence**

The School Excellence Framework supports all NSW schools in their pursuit of equity and excellence with a focus on students. Currently the School Excellence Framework does not recognise the contributions of public preschools.

### **Resource Funding**

Currently, public preschools receive staffing allocation and budget adjustment resource funding. EIUs receive a staffing allocation but no resource funding. The existing funding is inadequate to cover the cost of required resources to enable preschools to meet exceeding standards in Quality Assurance Assessment and Rating.