Summary
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Our vision

A highly skilled, educated, vibrant and inclusive NSW, where all people achieve their potential, build social and economic prosperity, participate in activities that contribute to their wellbeing, and contribute as informed citizens to our society.

Our priorities and outcomes

The NSW Department of Education and Communities has 3 key priorities:

- Quality teaching and leadership – to develop our teachers and leaders in education and increase their capacity to deliver our outcomes
- High expectations, closing the gaps – to ensure everyone has the opportunity to achieve their potential and participate fully in our society
- New and better ways of doing business – to develop our staff and support them in delivering excellence, through strong partnerships with others including parents and families, industry, and non-government education providers.

In early childhood, we aim to provide high quality early childhood education and care to give children a great start in life and at school.

At school, we aim to provide all students with the teaching and support they need to learn, achieve and progress.

In tertiary education, we aim to equip all students with the skills and knowledge for successful participation in employment and their communities, ensuring easier transitions, especially to higher education.

In our communities, we aim to build on the tremendous community spirit in NSW by promoting strong social partnerships.

Our services

The Department provided education and training services to over 1.4 million students through an extensive network of government schools, TAFE NSW Institutes and the NSW Adult Migrant English Service (AMES), including:

- preschool, primary and secondary school education
- VET programs and services
- TAFE NSW industry-recognised VET qualifications
- apprenticeships and traineeships
- adult and community education courses.

In April 2011, the Department of Education and Training became the Department of Education and Communities and its key responsibilities expanded to include Early Childhood Education and Care and the newly created Office of Communities.

Early Childhood Education and Care is responsible for the regulation of education and care services for children from birth through to, and including, school age. This responsibility includes the operation of around 3,500 early childhood services.

The newly created Office of Communities is responsible for:

- Aboriginal Affairs
- The Children’s Guardian
- The Commission for Children and Young People
- Community and Regional Engagement
- Hunter Region Sporting Venues
- Illawarra Venues
- Parramatta Stadium
- Sport and Recreation
- Sydney Olympic Park
- Volunteering
- Youth Strategy and Participation
- Veterans’ Affairs.


Our children and students

Our students comprise preschoolers to adult learners from culturally and geographically diverse backgrounds.

In 2011, there were:
- 4,416 government preschool children
- 435,749 government primary school students
- 309,791 full-time equivalent government secondary school students
- 552,856 TAFE NSW student enrolments.

In 2011, the Department was responsible for the regulation and administration of the apprenticeship and traineeship system in NSW, which supported 161,000 apprentices and trainees.

The Department was also responsible for regulating around 3,500 long day care and occasional care services, preschools, family day care schemes, home-based carers and mobile services.

Our communities, customers and stakeholders

The Department uses a number of customer feedback mechanisms to inform planning and development of its products and services to ensure they meet customer needs.

We worked closely with parents, students, employers and the wider community to provide early childhood, school education, and vocational education and training services they require.

We worked in partnership with a diverse range of stakeholders to support the development of vibrant, sustainable and inclusive communities, including local, state and federal government agencies, non-government organisations, service providers and peak bodies, industry and regulatory bodies, and tertiary and research institutes.

Our resources

The Department’s 2011-12 budget provided $14.5 billion in recurrent and capital funding for education and community services. This included:

- over $9.9 billion in recurrent funding for government schools in 2011-12
- $62.4 million over 4 years in recurrent funding to support additional schools minor maintenance funding, General Assistant training and under the Public Schools Upgrade fund
- $10.6 million in recurrent funding over 4 years for Student Support Officers
- $12 million in 2011-12 to commence the $261 million Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan to ensure the State’s students remain above the Australian average in national literacy and numeracy tests
- $2.2 billion on vocational education to improve skills and qualification levels across NSW
- over $752 million in 2011-12 on delivering capital works in the public education and communities sectors. This includes Commonwealth funding under the Building the Education Revolution Program
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- $279 million to support early childhood education, which includes the operation of Department-run preschools and supporting and regulating early childhood education and care services
- $145.2 million for sport and recreation services which helps to develop community sporting and recreational venues and facilities, and the management of government-owned or controlled sporting and recreation facilities, including implementing policy and regulatory frameworks, conducting compliance and educational programs
- $36.3 million on the Community Building Partnership Program over 2 years to fund community groups and local councils to invest in community infrastructure throughout the State
- $23 million to roll out 4,300 interactive whiteboards in 1,000 classrooms within 12 months, to enable teachers to personalise lessons and to access new media and online programs
- A range of equity and targeted programs in government schools. The 2011-12 budget includes funding of:
  - $1.18 billion for special education
  - $109 million for students in regional and rural areas in NSW
  - $216 million for students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds
  - $136 million for students from non-English speaking backgrounds
  - $73 million for Aboriginal education
- An allocation of $915 million for the non-government schools program, as required by legislation and various funding agreements.