Our organisation

Our ministers

In 2014, the education and training portfolios were the responsibility of the Minister for Education, the Hon. Adrian Piccoli MP. The Hon. Victor Dominello MP was the Assistant Minister for Education, alongside his responsibilities as Minister for Citizenship and Communities, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for Veterans’ Affairs. The Hon. Stuart Ayres MP was Minister for Sport and Recreation, having replaced the Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP as the Minister for Sport and Recreation on 23 April 2014.

On 1 July 2014, the Office of Sport was established as an executive agency related to the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and the divisions and entities within the Minister for Sport and Recreation’s portfolio were transferred to the DPC cluster.

The Hon. Mark Speakman MP was the Parliamentary Secretary for Tertiary Education and Skills until 17 April 2014 after which time he was replaced by the Hon. Catherine Cusack MLC. The work of the Minister for Citizenship and Communities was supported by the Hon. Matt Kean MP, the Parliamentary Secretary for Communities; the Hon. David Elliott MP, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier for Youth, Homelessness and Centenary of Anzac; and the Hon. Charlie Lynn MLC, the Parliamentary Secretary for Veterans’ Affairs.

The department

From 1 July 2014 there were some major changes to the structure of the department:

- TAFE NSW separated from the department and now operates as a separate government agency
- the Sport and Recreation and Veterans’ Affairs divisions were transferred to the DPC cluster.

As a result, this annual report includes the financial statements and operations of TAFE NSW, Sport and Recreation and Veterans’ Affairs up to 30 June 2014 only.

TAFE NSW will prepare a separate annual report for 2014/15 and the Sport and Recreation and Veterans’ Affairs portfolios will be included in DPC’s 2014/15 annual report.

As at the end of December 2014, the department consists of the following five portfolios.

Public Schools NSW

The department’s Public Schools NSW portfolio runs the public education system. With 2,219 public schools across NSW, we help young people grow into literate, numerate and well-educated citizens. Our schools give them the experiences and confidence to make a positive contribution to society. We also operate preschools at 100 primary and central schools. Government preschools provide an educational preschool program for children in the year before they are enrolled in Kindergarten, with a particular focus on services for disadvantaged communities.

Students in public schools have access to a rich and varied curriculum, delivered by quality teachers and dedicated school leaders. Our schools provide a firm foundation in both literacy and numeracy. Extensive science and technology, cultural, arts and sports programs further develop and enrich students’ knowledge. The Public Schools NSW portfolio has research partnerships with a number of tertiary institutions to help inform innovative approaches to teaching and assessment.
About us

The portfolio supports students with disability, those learning English as a second language, Aboriginal education and training, regional communities and early childhood education. We work closely with key stakeholders, including principals’ associations, the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG), parents and citizens’ associations, the Disability Council and other organisations with interests in equity and access to education.

Office of Education

The Office of Education provides strategic analysis and advice on cross-sectoral, state-wide and national developments across early childhood, school and tertiary education. We support the Minister for Education in strategic discussions with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions and lead negotiations over funding arrangements. Through the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, the portfolio leads evaluations of programs and provides education statistics to inform evidence-based policy making.

The office is also responsible for early childhood education and care in NSW. It regulates services across the state and is responsible for funding preschool service providers. Through our State Training Services, we allocate training funds across the public and private sectors, direct skills policy and funding, manage programs to meet skill needs and regulate the state’s apprenticeship and traineeship system.

Corporate Services

Corporate Services supports the work of portfolios by ensuring a skilled, productive workforce and efficient operating environment. The portfolio is responsible for:

- recruiting and placement of teachers, school administrative and support staff and corporate staff

### Table 5: Number of NSW public schools (2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of primary schools</td>
<td>1,617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of secondary schools</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of central schools</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools for specific purposes</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of environmental education centres</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of schools</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,219</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Education and Communities mid-year census. Notes: Figures are consistent with ABS Schools Australia (cat. 4221.0) counting rules, except for the following: the total number of schools differs from figures published by the ABS. The ABS only counts schools that have permanent enrolments for four or more continuous weeks and therefore environmental education centres, some schools for specific purposes and the Open High School are excluded.

### Table 6: Student-to-teacher ratios in NSW public schools (2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary student-to-teaching staff ratio</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary student-to-teaching staff ratio</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall student-to-teaching staff ratio</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Education and Communities mid-year census. Notes: Figures are consistent with ABS Schools Australia (cat. 4221.0) counting rules and ratios are expressed as full-time equivalents (FTEs). The number of preschool students and children in early intervention classes is not included in the FTE total, consistent with Schools Australia.
- developing and negotiating industrial awards and agreements and providing industrial relations advice
- providing legal support and advice to schools, TAFE NSW and the wider department
- investigating and managing employee conduct and performance issues
- coordinating the allocation, monitoring, reporting and management of financial resources across the department
- planning and delivering capital works, maintenance and infrastructure projects across the state
- ensuring value and efficiency in purchasing and compliance with procurement requirements
- introducing the Learning Management and Business Reform program to modernise the way the department delivers support services to schools and TAFE NSW institutes
- providing information and communication technologies to students, teachers and staff in schools and TAFE NSW institutes
- supporting schools, institutes and workplaces to achieve safe working and learning environments for students, staff and visitors
- providing support to schools to protect our assets and manage security-related incidents.

**Office of the Secretary**

The Office of the Secretary is the central point of contact for the department’s portfolios and ministers, providing consistent, high-quality and timely advice, briefings, correspondence and support of parliamentary operations. We are also responsible for:

- the Office of Communities, which leads community and regional engagement, volunteering, youth strategy and participation and the community building partnership program
- monitoring savings, efficiency targets and related reforms to ensure the department is meeting its budget
- strategic communications, media relations, public school promotion and community engagement
- corporate planning and performance reporting
- enterprise risk management
- audit services, including assurance, risk management, corruption prevention and related consulting services
- providing expert research on learning and development.

**Aboriginal Affairs**

As the NSW Government agency focused on Aboriginal community wellbeing, Aboriginal Affairs provides Aboriginal communities with a voice into government. We have a unique role in bringing together the full range of Aboriginal peoples’ social, economic and cultural rights and interests; and supporting a deeper understanding of Aboriginal communities, culture and aspirations within government, business and non-government sectors.

Aboriginal Affairs leads policy debate and reform within government to address complex cross-sectoral issues. We focus on capacity building to strengthen Aboriginal community leadership and governance, local solutions, improved service delivery and greater local accountability. We facilitate, promote and support culture and healing to increase cohesion and confidence within Aboriginal communities. We aim to improve economic and social prosperity for communities through economic development.

Aboriginal Affairs is responsible for coordinating the implementation of OCHRE: Opportunity, choice, healing, responsibility, empowerment, the NSW Government’s plan for Aboriginal affairs.