The Department of Education provides, funds and regulates education services for NSW students from early childhood to secondary school. We regulate and support the early childhood education and care sector. We deliver a world-class education to more than 772,000 students each year through our public schools and provide funding support to more than 409,000 students in non-government schools. We employ, develop and support teachers, leaders and other staff in public schools to deliver the best outcomes for students.

Through Aboriginal Affairs, we work with Aboriginal communities to promote social, economic and cultural wellbeing. Through OCHRE (opportunity, choice, healing, responsibility, empowerment), the NSW Government’s community-focused plan for Aboriginal affairs, we establish partnerships for economic prosperity, support effective Aboriginal community governance, and strengthen cultural identity and language.

**OUR VISION**

A highly skilled, educated, vibrant and inclusive NSW where all students are achieving their potential and contributing as informed citizens to our society.

Aboriginal people are determining their own futures.

**OUR OUTCOMES**

All children receive high-quality early childhood education and care to give them a great start in life and at school.

All primary and secondary students receive the teaching and support they need to learn, achieve and progress.

Aboriginal people have improved social, cultural and economic outcomes.

**OUR PRIORITIES**

We have high expectations for all and focus on closing gaps in achievement in areas of disadvantage. In September 2015, the NSW Premier announced a number of priorities for the state to grow the economy; deliver infrastructure; protect the vulnerable; and improve health, education and public services across NSW. Included in the Premier’s Priorities is an eight per cent increase in the proportion of students in the top two National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) bands for reading and numeracy. The State Priorities also include a 30 per cent increase in the proportion of Aboriginal students in the top two NAPLAN bands for reading and numeracy.

Quality teaching and leadership are essential to the success of our students as well as improving the literacy and numeracy skills of children in our schools. We develop our teachers and leaders and increase their capacity to deliver these outcomes.

Aboriginal Affairs focuses on culture and healing, leadership in government, growing NSW’s first economy and strengthening governance and capacity.

We improve customer satisfaction with our services and find new and better ways of doing business. We innovate and respond to the changing needs of the people of NSW. We develop our staff and support them in delivering excellence. We form strong partnerships with parents and families, industry and community groups, education, training and other providers. We are open and accountable both in our day-to-day business and in delivering our strategic objectives.
OUR STUDENTS

Preschool children

In the year before school, educational programs are provided in a range of settings including community preschools, Department of Education preschools and preschool programs within long day care services.

The department provides funding for 751 community-based preschools, 2,411 long day care services, 49 mobile preschools and 175 vacation care services. As at December 2015, the department was responsible for regulating 5,402 early childhood services. These services included 100 department-operated preschools.

Primary and secondary students

Our public schools provide an education for students from preschool through to Year 12. In 2015, more than 772,000 students were enrolled in 2,209 public schools. This represents about two-thirds of all NSW school students.

Our students reflect a diversity of cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds from the inner city, outer suburbs of Sydney, regional centres, and rural and isolated communities across NSW.

Apprentices and trainees

The department was responsible for the apprenticeship and traineeship system in NSW until 30 June 2015 when that responsibility moved to the Department of Industry, Skills and Regional Development. Until then, we supported 91,598 apprentices and trainees as well as approximately 30,613 employers. The department approved 25,478 new training contracts and an additional 4,680 re-commencements of apprentices and trainees who had previously cancelled their training contracts, while 21,318 apprentices and trainees successfully completed their formal training.

OUR COMMUNITIES

A diverse population of 7.5 million people call NSW home. More than a third of these (around 2.4 million people) have parents who were both born overseas and one in four people speak a language other than English at home. In 2015, more than 225,300 Aboriginal people resided in NSW, representing three per cent of the NSW population and 30.9 per cent of the Aboriginal population in Australia. NSW has the largest Aboriginal population compared to all other Australian states and territories and this is expected to grow to more than 282,900 by 2026.

There are around two million volunteers in NSW. Approximately 430,000 people volunteer their time to charities, welfare agencies and other organisations working for the social benefit of the community. Around 600,000 people support their local schools through school committees, boards and other education and training support organisations, or are involved in play groups, scouts, guides and other organisations supporting children and youth development.

Government-funded vocational education and training students, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All government-funded students</td>
<td>407,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>211,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with a language background other than English</td>
<td>76,356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with disability</td>
<td>35,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal students</td>
<td>30,324</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Government-funded Students and Courses. Notes: Government-funded activity includes Commonwealth and state funding. Figures for 2015 are not yet available.
### NSW public schools, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of schools</td>
<td>2,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary schools</td>
<td>1,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary schools</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for specific purposes</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for specific purposes</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central schools</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental education centres</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: The total number of schools differs from figures published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), which 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. A multi-campus college is reported by the ABS as one school, but campuses are reported individually in the above table.

### NSW public school enrolments, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total full-time and part-time primary and secondary students</td>
<td>772,794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time primary and secondary students</td>
<td>770,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time primary students</td>
<td>467,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time secondary students</td>
<td>302,759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool students</td>
<td>4,278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time secondary students</td>
<td>2,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in early intervention classes</td>
<td>710</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The number of preschool students and children in early intervention classes is not included in the full-time primary and secondary enrolments total, consistent with Schools Australia 2015.

### Student-to-teacher ratios in NSW public schools, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratio Type</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall student-to-teacher ratio</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary student-to-teacher ratio</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary student-to-teacher ratio</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The number of preschool students and children in early intervention classes is not included in the full-time equivalent total, consistent with Schools Australia.

### NSW public school student profile, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male students</td>
<td>396,203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female students</td>
<td>375,775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with a language background other than English</td>
<td>251,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal students</td>
<td>54,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in support classes</td>
<td>17,068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in schools for specific purposes</td>
<td>5,340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Student numbers for the student profile are counted as full-time equivalent (FTE), with the exception of students with a language background other than English, which is counted as the number of students (headcount). All Kindergarten to Year 10 students in NSW government schools are counted as full-time students, hence there is no difference between headcounts and FTEs when counting these students. Some students in years 11 and 12 are classed as part-time students, based on the total number of units studied.

Source: Department of Education mid-year census.

Note: Figures, except for total number of schools, are consistent with ABS Schools Australia (cat. 4221.0) counting rules and ratios are expressed as full-time equivalents.
OUR ORGANISATION

The department

As a result of machinery-of-government changes, there were changes to the structure of the department, effective as at 1 July 2015:

- State Training Services transferred to the Department of Industry, Skills and Regional Development
- the Office of Communities (except Aboriginal Affairs) transferred to the Department of Family and Community Services.

As a result, this annual report includes the financial statements and operations of State Training Services and the Office of Communities up to 30 June 2015 only. State Training Services will be included in Industry, Skills and Regional Development’s 2015–16 annual report and the Office of Communities (except Aboriginal Affairs) will be included in Family and Community Services’ 2015–16 annual report.

As at the end of December 2015, the department consists of the following divisions. The latest organisation chart is available on the NSW Department of Education website.

Organisational structure, Department of Education, December 2015
**School Operations and Performance**

School Operations and Performance runs the 2,209 public schools across NSW, helping young people grow into literate, numerate and well-educated citizens. The division also operates 100 preschools attached to 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. 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 and skills. School Operations and Performance has partnerships with a number of tertiary institutions to help inform innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

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

**Aboriginal Affairs**

Aboriginal Affairs works with Aboriginal communities to promote social, economic and cultural wellbeing through opportunity, choice, healing, responsibility and empowerment.

Aboriginal Affairs leads policy debate and reform within government to address complex cross-sectoral issues. As the NSW Government agency focused on Aboriginal community wellbeing, it provides Aboriginal communities with a voice into government. It has a unique role in bringing together the full range of Aboriginal peoples’ interests and supporting a deeper understanding of Aboriginal culture and aspirations within government, business, non-government and tertiary sectors.

**Strategy and Evaluation**

Strategy and Evaluation supports the work of divisions and schools through leadership of major education reforms, education research and evaluation, program management, and communication and engagement.

It is the central point of contact for the department’s divisions and ministers, providing consistent, high-quality and timely advice, briefings, correspondence and support of parliamentary operations. It monitors and shares research on emerging educational trends from early childhood through to higher education and is responsible for corporate planning, performance reporting and enterprise risk management.

The Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, an innovative education data hub in the division, provides education research and evaluation to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of education in NSW.

The division delivers strategic communications, media relations, school and department websites, public school promotion and community engagement. It is also responsible for monitoring savings, benefits management, efficiency targets and related reforms.

**Corporate Services**

Corporate Services supports the work of divisions and the delivery of high-quality teaching in schools by ensuring a skilled, productive workforce and efficient operating environment. The division is responsible for:

- recruiting and placing teachers, school administrative and support staff, and corporate staff
- developing and negotiating industrial awards and agreements as well as providing industrial relations advice
■ providing legal support and advice to schools 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
■ providing information and communication technologies to students, teachers and staff in schools
■ supporting schools 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.

Internal Audit

Internal Audit provides an independent and objective review and advisory service to the Secretary and the Audit and Risk Committee. It provides assurance that the department’s financial and operational controls, designed to manage the organisation’s risks and achieve its objectives, are operating in an efficient, effective and ethical manner.

Internal Audit assists management to improve the business performance of the department. It advises on fraud and corruption risks as well as on internal controls over business functions and processes.

Our governance structure

The executive is the strategic governing forum for the department and supports the Secretary’s responsibilities as the accountable officer. The executive has three main functions:

■ determine the strategic direction of the department
  – defining, guiding and reviewing corporate strategy related to election commitments, departmental and whole-of-government priorities
  – ensuring the department is responsive to changing community needs and government priorities
  – monitoring performance against the department’s fiscal strategy
  – monitoring the department’s service delivery, including its whole-of-government priorities for policy and strategic direction
  – monitoring, identifying and controlling risks that may impact on the achievement of departmental objectives
  – considering evaluation findings
  – ensuring adequate processes are in place to comply with legislative and financial management requirements
  – fostering an appropriate corporate culture consistent with the NSW Public Service Commission’s Ethical Framework and Code of Ethics and Conduct

■ strategic oversight of key projects.

Members of the executive team

In 2015, the executive consisted of seven members who met on a fortnightly basis:

■ Michele Bruniges, Secretary (Chair)
  (PhD Ed Measurement, MEd, Dip Ed Studies, Dip Teach)
■ Gregory Prior, Deputy Secretary, School Operations and Performance (MEd, BEd, Dip Teach)
■ Janet Davy, Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Evaluation (MEd, BEd)
■ Leslie Loble, Deputy Secretary, External Affairs and Regulation (MPA, BSc)
■ Peter Riordan, Deputy Secretary, Corporate Services (MBA, MLLR, BCom)
■ Jason Ardler, Head of Aboriginal Affairs (BEc)
■ Philip West, Chief Financial Officer (MCom, Grad Dip Bus, Dip Bus).