

NSW Secondary Principals' Council



Student Wellbeing Position Paper Ratified: November 2021

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Rationale

The purpose of this Position Paper is to present an agreed NSW Secondary Principals Council (NSWSPC) statement of position, principles and recommendations about student wellbeing.

The Position Paper has also been written to support principals in their leadership of student wellbeing by identifying areas requiring action by the NSW Department of Education (The Department).

Definition:

Student wellbeing refers to the psychological, cognitive, social and physical functioning and capabilities that students need to live a happy and fulfilling life.

In the NSW Department of Education student wellbeing encompasses the following areas.

- Health and Physical care
- Mental Health and wellbeing
- Behaviour and engagement
- Attendance
- Child protection and safety
- Student voice and participation

NSWSPC reference group organisation

Student Wellbeing	Disabilities and Inclusive Education
Behaviour management	Disability and Inclusion
Attendance	Mental Health
SSO	NDIS
Counselling	Access Request/placement panels
MAPA - physical response	OOHC
Student Voice	Trauma Informed Practice
APLAs/LAST	Support Classes



Interagency support	FON review
Child Protection	ASTP
School Uniform	Problematic & Sexualised Behaviour
School Canteen	Speech Pathology/Therapists
6-7 Transition	Nurses

Principles

The NSWSPC

- Recognises the importance of student wellbeing as fundamental to successful learning.
- Recognises the importance of ensuring appropriate human and financial resourcing, as well as sound measures of impact to achieve successes in Student Wellbeing.
- Student wellbeing is intrinsically bound by community and family circumstances and relies heavily on positive and effective interactions with families, local community and across government departments and community agencies.
- Student wellbeing is underpinned by the principles of positive education and is founded by positive and equitable relationships with all stakeholders.
- Suspension and expulsion is a work health safety policy that is a last resort consequence designed to protect student, staff and community safety.

Recommendations

The NSWSPC recommends that the Department:

- Listens to the voices of key stakeholders – students, staff, and parents as represented by the NSWSPC, PPA, Teachers Federation and Parents and Citizens Association
- Ensure all wellbeing policies in the areas listed above have current Principal representation on the writing and consultation teams.
- That new policies are trialled and reviewed prior to full implementation.
- Separate suspension/ expulsion policies from student wellbeing.
- All secondary schools with 7+ support classes should have a non-teaching Deputy Principal Support
- School counsellors / psychologists to be allocated and present working in all schools using the current methodology. *Appendix 1*
- All secondary schools with high levels of complexity measured by explicit criteria, should have an appropriately trained Instructional Leader student wellbeing/ behaviour allocated.
- All secondary schools student adviser allocations attract additional remuneration and increased release time via an increase from .1 to .2 per 100 students or part thereof in the concessional allowance in the entitlement report.
- All Initial Teacher education courses should include compulsory modules of study in positive education to be accredited. The courses should provide an overview of current theory e.g. Choice theory, PB4L, Restorative Practice, Trauma Informed Practice, social and emotional learning.
- The Department should implement Professional Learning based on the Principles of High Impact Professional Learning for all beginning teachers around effective behaviour management practice and social and emotional pedagogy as the foundation of effective learning. All schools and staff should have access to high quality differentiated professional learning in behaviour management and student wellbeing.



- Every school should have local access to a suspension centre staffed by expert teachers.

NSWSPC Position:

The NSWSPC is committed to participating in meaningful consultation with the Department and other organisations to achieve these recommendations and thereby build Student Wellbeing in NSW secondary schools



Appendix 1. Counsellor Allocation Methodology as at 15 July 21

Allocation Methodology

- Schools with 1 to 849 students will have an allocation of 0.05 FTE minimum and 1.0 FTE maximum
- The current model will be maintained. It will comprise of 60% enrolments and 40% factors of need.
- Factors of need are: students impacted by disability (40%); socio-disadvantage (40%) and remoteness (20%).
- Student Learning Need Index (SLNI) data to be used
- Large Schools: The current maximum 1.0 FTE for large schools will be removed.

Application of methodology

- Increasing allocation for large schools to greater than 1.0 FTE will result in 120 schools receiving an allocation greater than 1.0 FTE.
- For remaining schools, there will be 215 Primary Schools and 96 Secondary Schools, 6 Central Schools and 44 SSPs that will receive increases to their allocations.
- No school will receive a decrease in service allocation.
- Updated data will be used to re-run the allocations, so some variation may occur.
- 50 new positions will be funded and created to support the increased allocations.

