

STATE COUNCIL 1, 2024 AFFILIATE REPORT



State Council 1: 24 - 25 February 2024

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State Council Overview

State Council 1 provided a wonderful opportunity to kick-start the year. Chaired by WACSSO Senior Vice President, Julie Brooks, the agenda included an in-depth discussion with Education Minister Tony Buti MLA and a presentation from the research team at Murdoch University who are working with WACSSO staff on the project investigating increasing parent participation (and diversity) in volunteering on school P&Cs.

Collectively, Council reviewed important strategic topics such as the WACSSO budget, proposed updates to WACSSO Policy and organisational risks and mitigation strategies. Council also agreed on affiliate fees for 2024, the location of Conference for 2025 and 2026 and a reshaping of how P&C Contributions data is collected.

Education Issues

Discussions with the Education Minister identified several challenges and opportunities facing schools and parents:

- WACSSO thanked the Minister, on behalf of parents, for the government's decision to make public transport free for school students (to and from school).
- The landmark announcement of full funding for WA public schools by 2026 was discussed in detail. Specifically, WACSSO was keen to know the implementation plan for this funding announcement. The funding allocation is understood to prioritise disadvantaged schools, and the schedule is currently being developed. Minister Butti indicated that funding would be allocated by the end of 2024.
- There was a discussion on the pending Education Act review, especially how the Act relates to providing education to students with a disability.
- The SCSA review of post-secondary pathways yielded a fruitful discussion and WACSSO looks forward to receiving a copy of the panel's findings.

Other educational issues raised over the course of the weekend include:

- Growing demand for infrastructure due to population growth (new schools, school expansions etc), some schools at capacity (or above) use of demountables, insufficient facilities, aging assets etc
- NDIS funded activity on school premises during school time
- Full-service schools model eg on-site GP services etc
- Parking & student safety – near misses and potential for accidents due to lack of appropriate parking space/traffic control
- Extreme weather – the inconsistent approach taken by schools and some parent communities uninformed about their school's approach. Schools doing the best they can in trying circumstances eg power cuts and failing aircon equipment. P&Cs have been approached to support with funding and there was discussion on the suitability of these requests.
- Healthy food and drink policy changes - clarity needed on implementation and the underlying rationale for the changes.
- Teacher shortage & staffing issues
- P&Cs contributing funds to school grounds eg. playgrounds
- BYOD/other resources & cost of living pressures for families
- Financial support for families needing to send children to alternative schools to access face-to-face education eg. boarding costs.

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WACSSO State Council 1 2024 - The Hon Dr Minister Buit MLA with Councillors and Staff



During the breaks at State Council, Councillors recorded their 'Happy P&C Day WA' video messages. We can't wait to celebrate this event with our affiliates! Check out our [event webpage](#) for all your downloads and event ideas!

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Portfolio Sessions: Main Issues Discussed

Training and Development (T&D) Portfolio

The Training and Development Portfolio has committed to a review of the essential publications: President and Vice President's Guide, Treasurer's Guide and Secretary's Guide. All WACSSO publications will also be updated with the year and month of publication so that people accessing material can check that they are using the most recent version of the resource. It was noted that a wide variety of people viewed and/or attended the joint WACSSO-Stirling & Rose webinar on AI and Education. The attendance rate and the volume and quality of questions received point to this being an important topic for all education stakeholders. The Portfolio also identified opportunities to improve the induction process for new State Councillors. With a nomination and election period coming up, it was agreed that this area could be reviewed to improve the experience for newcomers. Broader State Councillor training for 2024 is proposed to include a refresher on the Constitution, attendance at affiliate training sessions to provide feedback and network with P&C members, data security training, strategic planning overview, time management and organisational skills, and diversity and inclusion training. Members then discussed topics to introduce to affiliate training, and it was agreed that a module on advocacy (for example, how to engage with local Members of Parliament, where to find their contact details and how to communicate views of the school community/parents). The Training Officer will also investigate ways to make sessions more engaging and fun, such as using quizzes and Kahoot.

Public Relations (PR) Portfolio

The PR Portfolio discussed several initiatives, including the new WACSSO website, the response to the end-of-year P&C Contributions Report, member engagement across WACSSO online platforms, the 2024 P&C Handbook, a What's App trial run in 3 Electorates and planning for P&C Day WA 2024. Portfolio members agreed that the best way to collect P&C Contribution data would be to extend the questionnaire distributed in April each year. This questionnaire traditionally collected Office Bearer details and Financial Statements but will, from 2024, include the financial and 'hours volunteered' information previously sought at the end of each year. This change in process aims to increase participation so that more meaningful and rigorous data can be collected. Also discussed were different qualitative questions that could be put out to P&Cs (such as educational issues, what P&Cs are funding, reasons P&Cs affiliate with WACSSO and so on) at the end of each year. The Portfolio reviewed upcoming advocacy opportunities, and finally, members discussed the strong supply of interesting 'good news stories' coming from P&Cs around WA. We encourage P&Cs to tag WACSSO in social media posts that depict good news stories to facilitate sharing on our platforms.

Planning Portfolio

The Planning Portfolio is continuing its review of the following topics in relation to the WACSSO Policy:

- AI in schools
- Provision of on-site Out-of-school-hours care (OSHC)
- The pre-requisites for student success in learning and at school

It was noted by portfolio members that in the current WACSSO Policy, there is no mention of parents and their responsibility to assist children with their learning. Draft wording will be developed at the next State Council meeting, with a view to proposing an update to the Policy at Conference 2024. The workflow associated with Certificates of Service and Certificates of Merit was discussed and it was agreed that prior to issuing a Certificate to a nominated member, WACSSO would request a copy of the Minutes which detail the nomination. There was a robust discussion about allowing amendments to motions on Conference Agenda Items. It was resolved to continue to allow this process to occur, as it is a rich experience for delegates and encourages discussion on important topics.