



P&C VOICE



TERM 3
2023
Conference
Edition

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Learning, Advocacy and Networking

WACSSO Conference 2023 was another resounding success!

Thank you to all the delegates, sponsors and partners who joined us last month for a weekend of learning, advocacy and networking.

Since the event, WACSSO phones have been running hot! Lots of engaged affiliates have been calling with questions and requests for advice and support. Thank you for getting in touch and sharing your stories with us, we are blown away by the difference each and every one of you makes in your communities!

There are a range of Conference resources now available on our [website](#). If you missed a session, or you weren't able to attend Conference this year and would like to see some of the information shared, hop online now.

You may have seen that we've opened up registrations for Conference 2024 early! If you're keen to attend next year's event, we encourage you to add your nomination to your next P&C meeting, so you can vote, decide on and [register](#) your delegates!

For those who attended, you will know there were many questions posed to the Minister for Education and the Director General, Education. We will be raising these questions on your behalf over the coming months and hope to be back in touch with affiliates once we have information to share.

Read our full Conference Report on pages 4-7 for all the information on this important annual event.



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Reflecting on Conference 2023

The 89th WACSSO Annual Conference: Yours Mine Ours, with its diverse array of topics presented in keynote addresses, interactive workshops, and exhibitor displays, served as a rallying point for all those committed to enhancing mental health, education, and community engagement. Furthermore, it again highlighted the power of school communities working together to support children and young people through their school journey, so that they have every opportunity to lead rich and fulfilling lives.

The diversity of the student presentations (one of my favourite parts of Conference) highlighted that our children's education experiences are unique to them. Yes, there are shared areas, but each child and young person will experience even a shared experience in their own way. This presents a challenge for schools and families, but meet it we must!

The Conference theme, Yours Mine Ours, has the spirit of care and togetherness. Every child matters. Our keynote speakers discussed the complex issues facing children, their families, and schools. Mental health, poverty, insufficient resources, stigma, and workforce challenges were raised. Speakers also spoke about resilience, healing, joy and celebrations, love, and courage. Their insights were powerfully moving, reinforcing that supportive communities contribute to healing, growth, and strength.

As I looked across the room to the hundreds of P&C delegates absorbing all that was being presented, I knew they represented thousands of volunteers across WA. For those who were not in the room to hear me say it, thank you for your time and effort. You may never know how your positive actions impact someone else. It may be a smile as you serve at the canteen, it may be reaching out and saying welcome to our school, or the call "we got this" in the final push for a busy bee or fundraiser activity. Or, like Albany SHS P&C and Norseman DHS P&C did by presenting Conference agenda items, it might be raising an issue impacting other schools. Big or small, every second spent in positive service to your school community is appreciated by WACSSO.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

An update from
Pania Turner

At Conference, I also had the privilege of awarding Life Membership to former Councillor for Perth North past Senior Vice President Jennifer Blair. Read about Jenny's longstanding service to the objects of WACSSO on page 7.

State Council have been busy representing affiliates in various contexts. Recently, the WACSSO Senior Vice President Julie Brooks and Councillor for Goldfields Esperance, Katherine Loader, visited Albany as Rural and Remote Education Advisory Council (RREAC) members. WACSSO sits on this advisory group alongside Isolated Children's' Parents' Association WA and Catholic Parents Association WA as advocates for parents across all education sectors. RREAC fulfils an important role in providing advice to the Minister for Education on the challenges facing people living in rural and remote Western Australia. The Albany visit provided an opportunity for members to visit a number of education facilities and speak with staff and students. I look forward to the report coming from the visit.

WACSSO has also represented the parent voice on the following committees/meetings in Terms 2 and 3:

President

- Systems Alliance Group – Meeting of Education Stakeholders
- FreshSNAP Stakeholder Advisory Group
- Boards and Councils Advisory Group
- E-cigarette Use Among Young People Stakeholder Group
- Parent Webinar - The Parent Voice in Student Wellbeing
- Fathering Project
- Pathways to Post School Success

President and Senior Vice President

- Active Travel to School
- Schools Curriculum and Standards Authority
- Sustainably Active Schools
- NDIS

President and WACSSO Executive

- Participation and Access School Camps

Senior Vice President

- Road Safety and Drug Education Statewide Services

State Councillors

- Rural and Remote Education Advisory Council (President & Councillors Great Southern, Midwest, and Goldfields Esperance)
- Children's Crossings and Road Safety Committee (Councillor for South West)
- WACE Refresh (President, Senior Vice President and Councillor for Perth North)
- Swan West Network Schools Conference (Councillor for Swan West)



Message from the Director General

LISA RODGERS
Director General
Department of
Education

Congratulations to Pania and the team at WACSSO on another outstanding annual conference. It was wonderful to come together and meet with P&C representatives from across WA.

The theme for the 2023 conference was 'Yours, Mine, Ours', which captured the collective responsibility we have for the safety and education of all children. There were many meaningful discussions at the conference around community participation, effective advocacy and the wide-reaching impacts of P&Cs.

I hope those in attendance were as impressed as I was with Lucy Adams and Kele Readhead, the 2 WA Student Councillors who spoke so eloquently about the brilliant work they are doing.

Members of the WA Student Council also had the very special opportunity to sit down and have a conversation with 2023 Australian of the Year Taryn Brumfitt this Term. Taryn is a documentary director who leads the Body Image Movement, an organisation that teaches people to love and appreciate their bodies.

As part of the event, Taryn shared her own journey while students discussed how young people are feeling about their own bodies. They also discussed strategies and resources for positive body image which they will share with their peers at school.

There has been fantastic uptake this Term in a range of initiatives including the Premier's Reading Challenge, the Minister's Running Challenge, and the Minister's Innovation Challenge. These opportunities enable students to further expand on the skills they learn in the classroom and allow them to extend themselves beyond their comfort zones, while also encouraging friendly competition.

In the second half of the year, we all look forward to the WA Education Awards. Nominations opened in Term 3. The awards showcase the exceptional achievements, dedication and innovation of WA public schools and celebrate the important role they play in shaping the lives of young people. There are 2 new award categories this year to recognise excellence in cultural responsiveness and disability and inclusion. I look forward to celebrating our winners later in the year. If you haven't already, please nominate your school!

We live in a vast State as we all know, and I relish the opportunities I get to visit schools from all corners of WA. This Term I travelled to many parts of our beautiful State including the Midwest, the Wheatbelt and the Kimberley. Connecting with regional schools and their communities is something that I love. The overwhelming sense I get when visiting our schools is that their P&Cs play a vital role in improving student outcomes. I would also like to wish Beverley District High School a happy 150th birthday!

I thank all P&C members for their dedication, support and commitment. Your countless hours of volunteering and generous contributions do not go unnoticed. It is through your collective efforts that opportunities for students are made possible. Without you, our school communities would lack the elements that enrich and strengthen the educational experience for all students. Together, we create a nurturing and thriving environment where our students can truly flourish.

I wish you and your schools all the very best for the remainder of 2023!

WACSSO CONFERENCE 2023



Early bird registrations for WACSSO Conference 2024 are open now. Click [here](#) for more info!

WACSSO Conference 2023 was a huge success. Thank you to all who joined us!

Attended by 376 registered attendees, representing over 220 P&C Associations from around the State, the highly successful 2023 WACSSO Conference was formally opened by the WACSSO President, Pania Turner, with Carol Foley again providing a moving Welcome to Country. Consistent with the theme 'Yours, Mine, Ours: Taking Collective Care of our Children', over the weekend, delegates listened to motivational and informative presentations from a range of guest speakers, including keynotes Dr Helen Street and Kendall Whyte, who focused their presentations on the important role we all play when listening to and supporting the young people in our communities. The weekend also included the participation of students, through the popular student panel, the new addition of members of the Department of Education Student Council and performances from the Mount Pleasant Primary School Choir, John Forest Secondary College Jazz Band and incredible soloist, Indigo Ellis.

Along with the keynotes, speakers at Conference included the Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA, Minister for Education and Training and Lisa Rodgers, Director General of Education, the Commissioner for Children and Young People Jacqueline McGowan-Jones and Dr Megan Paull and Dr Katherine Sugars, from Murdoch University. Paul Searle from the Department of Education and Libby Jardine from the Cancer Council WA led an important discussion on vaping and young people and major conference partners Tim Cusack from Containers for Change and Eva Meester from the Triple P Program also provided essential information to delegates.





Conference workshops were held each day, offering the chance for delegates to dive deep into topics of interest. Workshop topics included the business of running a canteen, the positive parenting program (helping parents raise happy, healthy and confident children), Containers for Change (help the environment and raise funds for your P&C!), social media 101, P&Cs and Principals – powerful partnerships, cyber safety (parenting in the digital age), Volunteering WA (bye bye burnout), and incident management at schools (how P&Cs can help communities impacted by significant events). Workshops were well attended, with positive feedback from delegates.

The ever-popular student panel saw delegates meet four incredible young students, each of whom had an impressive story to tell. Joshua Patrick from Northam Senior High School spoke of the power of community support in times of challenge and hardship, Alexis Milne spoke on the transformative power of volunteering in your community, Jon Copson presented his impactful, award-winning short film capturing the ATAR experience, and Molly Ireland inspired the audience with her journey so far to becoming a pilot. The students remained on stage while the audience asked questions; everyone was impressed with the poise and maturity of these emerging leaders.



WACSSO Conference 2023



Day one of Conference closed with the highly anticipated Networking Sundowner, sponsored by Grange Insurance. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the performance from John Forrest Secondary School Jazz Band and the opportunity to connect in the relaxed atmosphere.

Sunday morning saw the return of our popular 'Sunriser', sponsored by Foodbank, with delegates taking full advantage of the fun and games designed to make new connections (and win some prizes!)



"Across the weekend, particularly during the agenda and AGM session, it was inspiring to see the passion of P&C delegates as they spoke on behalf of their school communities", said WACSSO President, Pania Turner. "The collective call to action from P&Cs across WA remains a powerful aspect of the WACSSO Conference, which drives WACSSO's advocacy work," she added.

Agenda items raised and passed included a number of updates to WACSSO Policy to ensure that it remains contemporary and meets the needs of schools and P&Cs now, and into the future. Two items raised by P&Cs that will empower WACSSO President to advocate for funding for CCTV cameras and a re-examination of the 'Currency of Evidence' for Equitable Access Adjustments for ATAR Course Examinations were also passed.

The 2023 WACSSO Annual Conference was a special event, made possible by the hard work of the WACSSO team, presenters, sponsors, and our amazing network of Western Australian P&Cs. This year's event again drew high numbers, and the atmosphere buzzed consistently for the whole two days, which was fantastic to experience.

For more photos, check out our Facebook album [here](#).

Celebrating new WACSSO Life Member Jenny Blair



At Conference 2023, WACSSO President Pania Turner acknowledged the exceptional service of former Councillor for Perth North and WACSSO Senior Vice President, Jenny Blair, by awarding her WACSSO Life Membership.

In her speech, Pania spoke of how Jenny performed her roles with integrity, compassion, kindness, and consideration for people throughout her time with WACSSO. Volunteering her time and expertise for the betterment of others over many years, Jenny's diligent and dedicated service to affiliates, to her fellow Councillors and staff, to the organisation, and to public education in Western Australia make her a worthy recipient of Life Membership.

Some of Jenny's accomplishments include:

- Councillor Perth North 2015-2023
- WACSSO Senior Vice President 2017-2023
- Representing WACSSO on external committees and participating in consultation meetings and round tables
- Building WACSSO's relationship with stakeholders within the Department of Education, and other organisations such as TKI, SDERA, Constable Care, Catholic Parents WA, SCSEA, WASCA, and many others
- Leading the Planning portfolio in a review of the WACSSO Constitution, By-laws, and structures within State Council

- Improving WACSSO Policy to ensure our language is inclusive and that Policy principles reflect parent views of ongoing and emerging educational matters
- Contributing to WACSSO position papers and parliamentary enquires including giving evidence in person on public education matters
- Leading affiliate representation on environmental sustainability issues and student learning opportunities within the public education system, steering WACSSO toward improved sustainability practices
- Contributing to the organisational restructure of WACSSO including design and recruitment for the role of Executive Officer.

In addition to her extensive list of duties, the Senior Vice President role is an essential support to the President. Jenny's wisdom, encouragement, and her strength have been an invaluable support.

Jenny exemplifies the WACSSO values of collaboration, skill, and agility to advocate for equity fearlessly and passionately in our public schools. WACSSO congratulates Jenny on her accomplishments and well-deserved recognition.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN THROUGH BIG MILESTONES: TIPS FROM TRIPLE P



Big milestones are a part of growing up, and they come with a mix of emotions for both children and parents. Whether it's the first day of school, the start of a new Term or moving up a grade, positive parenting strategies can help make the process smoother for everyone involved. Here are five tips from the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program® to help support parents, children and school communities as whole:

Pay attention to your emotions

As children become more independent, parents and carers can often feel a range of emotions, from worry to joy. Learning to pay attention to those reactions – and focusing on staying calm and optimistic – can set the tone and role model the behaviour you want to see.

Connect with educators and other families

Knowing what to expect can help children feel more confident with new, or different, school situations. Connecting with educators and other families, orientation days, activities and “rehearsing” what’s going to happen helps everyone to feel a little more prepared, and can mean a smoother adjustment.

Establish daily routines

Daily routines help families feel calm and organised. A good first step is to prepare for the day ahead, the night before. Little traditions within the family, like a bedtime phrase, a favourite meal or a regular activity together, no matter how small, can also be a buffer for lots of unfamiliar experiences.

Listen actively

When kids are talking to you, try to give them your full attention and show you’re interested in what they have to say. This can help them feel valued and understood. Plus, when we model good listening skills, we’re helping kids develop their own social skills.

Realistic expectations

When kids are dealing with changes and milestones in their school life, keep things realistic. It’s normal for new experiences to be a little tough, and not everything will go smoothly. Being patient and optimistic can help everyone get through and thrive.

DID YOU KNOW?

Triple P is one of the world's most effective and evidence-based parenting programs. It's backed by over 40 years of research, Australian university-developed and used in more than 30 countries around the world.

Their free online parenting programs are a go-to resource for parents and carers who need easy-to-understand strategies to help with everything from social skills and self-regulation to cooperation and resilience.

These invaluable resources are available to your school communities:

Triple P Online

helps parents/carers of children up to 12 years old to confidently handle everyday challenges.

Fear-Less Triple P Online

provides strategies to support parents/carers of children who are often anxious, worried or fearful. It's full of practical ways to help children learn to manage and reduce anxious feelings, and to improve their emotional wellbeing for the long term.

There's even Triple P Online for Baby, a program to help new or expecting parents get off to a positive start.

All programs are a fun mix of videos, worksheets, tips and activities. And best of all, they're free and online now!

Want to see the difference positive parenting can make in your family? [Register today.](#)



Proven, positive parenting strategies for every family

The Triple P – Positive Parenting Program® helps parents and carers develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to manage the ups and downs of parenting.

The free, online programs provide a toolbox of practical strategies to support their child's development, grow closer and boost the skills children need in life, like resilience, self-regulation, and more. Evidence-based and backed by decades of research, the programs benefit families and whole school communities.

Spread the word about Triple P's FREE online programs and help support families at your school. For resources and promotional assistance: contact@triplep.net

Find out more about our online parenting programs at triplep-parenting.net.au



Funded by the Australian Government

Triple P International acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We respectfully acknowledge Elders, past and present who continue to guide us with their wisdom on our journey to support and build strong healthy families.

Continuing the Meals on Wheels Service

Shark Bay P&C Good News Story

In Shark Bay, north of Perth, there is a significant retiree population, but the Meals on Wheels service was not available. Shark Bay School students and the P&C have stepped in, and now about a dozen young people volunteer their time twice a Term on Saturday mornings to prepare meals.



The volunteer program was initially established by a youth group, with the Shark Bay School P&C now providing additional support to run the program. Given the young people involved don't have driver's licenses, having the P&C involved has helped with the 'wheels' aspect of operations. The P&C also use the opportunity to develop skills in the young volunteers.

"It brings together adult volunteers to share their expertise and to lead by example, giving back to their community. It also gives our deserving seniors a night off from cooking and increases their social interactions with younger members of our society. Overall, Shark Bay P&C are privileged to be able to continue Meals on Wheels in Shark Bay," she adds.

"Shark Bay P&C, with the financial support of Real Futures and Shark Bay War on Waste are delighted to be able to continue this very worthy venture," say P&C Treasurer, Rebecca Mornoney. "Meals on Wheels allows our youth to come together in a safe and social environment, learn new skills and discover the joys of volunteering."

This initiative is a wonderful example of the P&C harnessing the power of volunteering to do good in the community. Providing an opportunity for the young people to get involved helps them develop their civic and leadership skills while at the same time enjoying time working together as a team.



Q & A

01 CAN MULTIPLE OFFICE BEARER ROLES BE HELD BY THE SAME PERSON?

Every day, the WACSSO office receives enquiries from P&C members about the running of their P&C Association. The following are just some of the questions asked with answers that may be helpful to your Association.

01 While it is recommended to avoid holding joint roles where possible, the only time this is acceptable (without approval) is when the school is a small school or when it is a 'large school' (with approval) Rule 12.0. In both cases, it is only acceptable for the combination of Secretary and Treasurer. No other offices may be combined and held by the same person.

02 Yes, as an example there may be times the Treasurer may not be able to do the banking because they are away on holidays (Rule 17.4). The P&C should foresee such occurrences and resolve to delegate roles to financial members at one of the first meetings of the year. These resolutions should always be minuted so a permanent record is kept of the arrangement.

03 No, Special Resolutions are for significant changes and must be passed at a General Meeting (AGM, Special General Meeting included) where every P&C member has the chance to take part in debate and vote (Rule 26.3). Note: All general meetings require 7 days' notice and Special Resolutions must be supported by no less than 3/4 of the members present to be passed.

02

CAN AN ASPECT OF AN OFFICE BEARER'S ROLE BE DELEGATED TO ANOTHER MEMBER?

03

CAN WE PASS A SPECIAL RESOLUTION AT AN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING?

SIGN UP FOR TRAINING NOW!

In-person and webinar training sessions available soon.

The WACSSO training team are currently planning a range of sessions to be available in Term 4, 2023 and throughout 2024. With metro and regional options available covering a wide variety of topics, there is something for everyone! Remember, training is a feature of your WACSSO membership, so all training sessions are provided to WACSSO affiliates at no additional cost! More info? [Email us](#).



NOTICE BOARD

eCigarettes, Vaping and Young People

There has been growing concern about the harmful effects of e-cigarettes and vaping. At the recent WACSSO Conference, an expert panel consisting of representatives from the Department of Education and Cancer Council WA, discussed a range of topics put forward by the delegates in attendance.

Key topics that emerged from this discussion included:

The important role of parents

Parents can help to arm their children with the knowledge and skills they need to make safer and more informed choices in relation to vaping. They can do this by:

- taking everyday opportunities to start the conversation (starting the discussion when you're both relaxed is helpful – for e.g., at the dinner table, when you're driving them somewhere, or watching TV together).
- knowing the facts and where to access credible information (it's important your child knows the risks associated with vaping but at the same time, if you use scare tactics, your child may dismiss what you are saying).
- avoiding lectures and scare tactics.
- making time to listen and listening actively with empathy and understanding (this lets your child know you are interested and helps maintain a close relationship).

- knowing where their child is in both the physical and online environments.
- challenging the idea that everyone is vaping.
- role modelling healthy attitudes and behaviours.
- encouraging their children to engage in activities that benefit their health and wellbeing.

Facts about e-cigarettes and vaping

- The nicotine in 1 vape can equal 50 cigarettes.
- Vaping has been linked to serious lung disease.
- E-cigarettes/vapes are designed and marketed to appeal to young people.
- For more facts please download the parents and carer factsheet from the [link](#).

Sale of e-cigarettes/vapes in WA

If you suspect someone is selling vapes or e-cigarettes and their components, you can report it to the Department of Health by emailing TobaccoPolicy@health.wa.gov.au. For more information about sale of e-cigarettes/vapes in WA please visit Department of Health [website](#).



NOTICE BOARD

eCigarettes, Vaping and Young People

Young people can access support from:

- General Practitioner
- Youth health service
- headspace
- Youth Focus
- Alcohol drug support line 1800 198 024
- Parent and Family Drug Support Line 1800 653 203
- Quitline 13 78 48 or online webchat

Call the WA Quitline for confidential advice and support. Quitline counsellors can answer any questions you may have about vaping and help you come up with ways to approach the conversation with your child.

Where to get more information:

- [Department of Education](#)
- [Department of Health](#)

All schools can attend professional learning provided by the Department. Support is also available through the Department's Road Safety and Drug Education branch to assist schools to implement a whole school approach to alcohol and other drugs education which includes vaping.

WACSSO and the Department of Education are joining forces to deliver E-cigarettes and vaping: Online parent information session, during Term 4. More information about dates and registration will be provided.





Department of Education
Department of Health

THE FACTS ABOUT VAPING

Electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes, often called 'vapes', are electronic devices designed to deliver vapourised liquids into the lungs. There are many different styles of vapes available and they can be difficult to spot.

The main ingredient in vapes is propylene glycol, vegetable glycerine or glycerol, and they often also contain nicotine, flavours and other chemicals. Vapes may contain harmful chemicals that aren't listed on the pack.

The biggest misunderstanding about vapes is that they are harmless compared to cigarettes. This is not true. **Vapes are not safe.**

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY'RE VAPING?



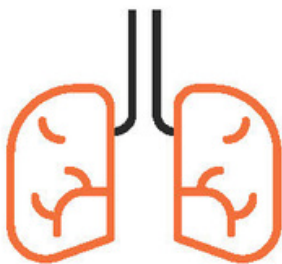
Many vapes contain nicotine making them **very addictive**



The nicotine in 1 vape can
= 50
cigarettes



Young people who vape are **3 times** as likely to take up smoking



Vaping has been linked to **serious lung disease**



Vapes can contain the same **harmful chemicals** found in cleaning products, nail polish remover, weed killer and bug spray

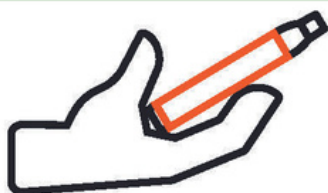


Vapes come in a variety of designs and styles and can be **easy to conceal**

VAPES APPEAL TO YOUNG PEOPLE

The flavours (such as watermelon, grape, caramel, bubble-gum, vanilla and mint) and colourful packaging used for vapes make them appealing to young people. **Many vapes also contain nicotine, which young people can become addicted to very quickly.**

Tobacco companies are continuously looking for new customers. Vapes are a new way to get young people addicted to nicotine, which is often difficult to quit.



HOW BIG IS THE PROBLEM?

As you may be aware, the uptake of vaping by young people is increasing. Research shows that in WA, **13.5% of school students aged 12 to 17 years have tried an e-cigarette.**

Of those who had tried 2 out of 3 (66%) had not used one in the last 30 days. Young people who vape are 3 times as likely to take up smoking cigarettes.

NICOTINE IS HARMFUL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



Nicotine is a drug that is often in vapes and is highly addictive for young brains.

It can cause long-lasting negative effects on brain development.

Nicotine changes the way brain synapses are formed in young people.

The impacts can include impaired attention, learning, memory, and changes in mood.

RISKS TO PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Vapes may expose young people to chemicals and toxins at levels that have the potential to cause negative health effects. **Vapes can leave a young person at increased risk of depression and anxiety.** Vaping has also been linked to serious lung disease. Importantly, many of the long-term harms of vaping are still unknown. The liquid in vapes and the vapour is not water. Vapes can expose young people to:

- the same harmful chemicals found in cleaning products, nail polish remover, weed killer and bug spray.
- toxins such as formaldehyde and heavy metals.
- ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs.
- flavouring chemicals such as diacetyl (a chemical linked to serious lung disease).

Vapes have even been known to explode causing serious burns.



DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY'RE VAPING?

THANK YOU!

**WACSSO Annual
Conference would not
be possible without the
support of our partners.**

We thank all those organisations who support WACSSO and our affiliates by sponsoring, supporting or partnering with us to deliver our 2023 Conference.

Regional, rural and remote supporter



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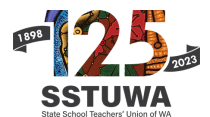
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WACSSO

STATE COUNCILLORS

The Western Australian Council of State School Organisations Inc. (WACSSO) State Council is made up of a 20 elected Councillors and a President, all of whom are volunteers.

The State Council meets several times a year to discuss educational issues of interest to Parents and Citizens' Associations (P&Cs), determine the direction of WACSSO and to influence the broad direction of education for the benefit of students.



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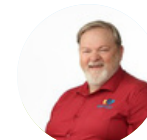
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**SIGN UP TO RECEIVE
OUR
FORTNIGHTLY
ENEWS**

