



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 3 – EDUCATION

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2025-2026

Supplementary questions

Portfolio Committee No. 3 – Education

Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney
(Houssos)

Hearing: Wednesday 27 August 2025

Answers due by: Responses due by Tuesday 23 September 2025

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BUDGET ESTIMATES 2025-2026

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

Questions from Dr Amanda Cohn MLC
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Air Quality

- (1) What guidance is currently provided to schools who are seeking to improve classroom ventilation?
 - (a) When was this guidance updated?
- (2) Where portable air purifiers are provided for classroom ventilation, what guidance or monitoring supports their use?

Synthetic turf

- (3) Will you prevent or remove installation of synthetic turf at Education facilities in bushfire zones given its flammability?

Questions from Ms Abigail Boyd MLC

Lambton High School

- (4) Is the Minister aware of community concerns regarding green space at Lambton High School being removed for the development of a 12 court basketball facility?
 - (a) Given the importance of access to green space for the physical and mental wellbeing of students, will the Minister commit to advocating for the protection of green space for students at Lambton High School?

Closure of Chatswood Community Preschool

- (5) Is the Minister aware of community concerns regarding the decision of Willoughby City Council to not renew the lease at Chatswood Community Preschool which has been providing families with high-quality, affordable, community-run education for 44 years, in favour of a for-profit long daycare service?
 - (a) What is the Minister doing to address these concerns and protect community run early childhood services from being taken over by larger for-profit providers?

Schools for Specific Purposes (SSPs)

- (6) What is the total government spending on SSPs, for each financial year in the last five years?

- (7) How many new SSPs have been built or commenced being built since 2023?
- (8) What is the total number of SSPs in NSW, in each of the last five years?
- (9) What is the total number of primary schools with support classes in NSW, in each of the last five years?
- (10) What is the total number of secondary schools with support units in NSW, in each of the last five years?

Suspensions and expulsions data for 2023

- (11) Answers to my supplementary question 443 received 24 March 2025 (see [link](#)) failed to answer the questions asked. The answer provided was: “The department is committed to transparent reporting of suspension and expulsion data in NSW public schools. 2024 data is not yet available. The public factsheet will be made available online at <https://data.nsw.gov.au/data/dataset/nsw-education-suspensions-and-expulsionsin-nsw-government-schools>.” The department has previously provided disaggregated data when asked, for example in response to my supplementary questions provided on 24 October 2023. Why hasn't this data been provided on notice or in supplementary questions since then?
 - (a) The data that I requested in questions on notice 3274 is not contained in what is publicly available. Can you please provide a proper answer to these questions, for the year 2023, and if possible any of 2024?
 - i. If this is not possible, is it because the department does not collect this data, or another reason? Please explain.
 - ii. For example, some of the questions asked were in regards to how many times an extension was approved for suspension times. Does the department monitor the extensions that it approves?

Workers compensation

- (12) How many workers' compensation claims have been lodged by Department of Education staff in the past 12 months?
- (13) What proportion of claims are lodged late (beyond the legislative 48-hour timeframe), and what systems are in place to reduce delays?

- (14) Has the Department analysed whether particular roles (e.g., principals, special education teachers, casual teachers) are disproportionately represented in claims?
- (15) What feedback mechanisms exist for staff to report concerns about the psychological safety of the claims process itself (e.g., treatment by insurers, investigators, or RTW coordinators)?
- (16) Has the Department been subject to any notices, audits, or sanctions from SIRA relating to workers' compensation management?
- (17) What steps are being taken to improve data collection and transparency around injury trends and claims outcomes across the public school system?
- (18) What training do principals and managers receive on their obligations to report injuries?
 - (a) How many staff have actually completed that training, and what proportion of school leaders are non-compliant?
 - (b) How does the Department ensure principals and school staff are properly trained in their obligations to report workplace injuries within statutory timeframes?
- (19) How does the Department work with icare to protect injured workers from undue surveillance or adversarial claims management practices?
- (20) How does the Department incorporate workers' compensation injury data into its broader occupational health and safety planning for teachers?
- (21) What governance or audit mechanisms exist to ensure that workers' compensation obligations are being met consistently across all regions and school types?
- (22) What are the injury trends in the last financial year?
- (23) If icare denies or delays a claim, what steps does the Department take to support the staff member directly?
- (24) Has the Department ever raised concerns with SIRA about the way icare manages claims for Education staff?
- (25) Has the Department ever received complaints from its staff about being subject to surveillance or intrusive investigations?
 - (a) If so, what did you do about it?
- (26) How many staff are currently on return-to-work plans, and what is the average duration?

New school infrastructure

- (27) With significant new dwellings proposed across the Inner West, Bays West, Pyrmont and Ultimo is there an identified school capacity issue in these areas?
- (28) What are the Department's plans for new school infrastructure in these areas?
- (29) What is the Department's position on new schools proposed on flood affected land?
- (30) Is the Department being consulted on a proposal for a new school in Wentworth Park, Glebe?
 - (a) Is the Department aware that Wentworth Park is severely flood affected?

Early Childhood Education Advisory Group (ECAG)

- (31) How many times has the Early Childhood Education Advisory Group (ECAG) met?
 - (a) Can you provide the minutes of these meetings since 2019?
 - (b) Can you provide a complete list of all the groups who are in ECAG?
 - (c) Who determines which organisations are part of ECAG?

Voluntary contributions

- (32) Can you break down the total 2023 voluntary school contributions (\$29,276,065.20) to indicate how much came from parents and how much came through structures such as the Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) or the finance/resourcing committee?
- (33) Can you break down the total 2023 subject contributions (\$41,627,280.97) to indicate how much came from parents and how much came through structures such as the Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) or the finance/resourcing committee?
- (34) How are voluntary contributions monitored by the Department at a school level, in terms of how much is collected and where exactly the funds are spent?
 - (a) How does the Department monitor whether schools are breaching the policy around the type of contributions they can request, for example communal classroom items?
 - (b) How does the Department monitor whether principals are consulting with the P&C association when determining the budgeting process?
- (35) Is there a cap on voluntary contributions for extra-curricular activities?
- (36) What is the process for schools returning funds to the P&C where required?

- (a) Are you aware of any instances where schools are not returning funds to the P&C, or are investing the contributions that were intended for the P&C into the school's general funds?

Disability

- (37) The PC3 *Inquiry into the experiences of children and young people with disability in education settings* heard evidence about the difficulties siblings of students with disability face. Has the government considered introducing support for siblings, such as the idea of introducing individual learning plans for siblings of people with disability?
 - (a) Our inquiry heard evidence that in some instances, teachers lack adequate skills to handle disabilities in the classroom, leading to reliance on siblings to help support and teach students with disability. What are you doing to address this?
- (38) In relation to recommendation 11 of the PC3 *Inquiry into the experiences of children and young people with disability in education settings*, which was supported by the government, what action has been taken to increase the number of appropriately qualified Deaf teachers, and implement professional development strategies based on an inclusive education capability framework for principals, teaching assistants and teachers of Deaf children?
- (39) In relation to recommendation 12 of the PC3 *Inquiry into the experiences of children and young people with disability in education settings*, which was supported by the government, what action has been taken to increase the number of qualified specialist vision teachers for blind and low vision students, to be engaged for all students who are blind/ low vision?
- (40) In relation to recommendation 14 of the PC3 *Inquiry into the experiences of children and young people with disability in education settings*, which was supported by the government, what action has been taken to establish culturally safe policies and procedures for First Nations students with disability, in consultation with First Nations peoples and their representatives?
- (41) In relation to recommendation 16 of the PC3 *Inquiry into the experiences of children and young people with disability in education settings*, which was supported by the government, what action has been taken to invest in specialist and allied health workforces to support children and young people with disability?
- (42) I understand the government was addressing the capital investment needs for educational infrastructure while considering the Disability Royal Commission's recommendations. Has the government completed its process of reviewing funding prioritisation for infrastructure decisions?

- (43) The government accepted in principle recommendation 7.2 of the Disability Royal Commission relating to preventing the inappropriate use of exclusionary discipline against students with disability. Has the government reviewed the current behaviour policy in accordance with this recommendation?
- (a) In relation to this, has the government begun reviewing provisions governing the registration of non-government schools to impose obligations relating to exclusionary discipline in the non-government sector that are commensurate with those of the government sector?
- (44) In 2020, the Department provided information to the Budget Estimates committee regarding all abuse complaints made against staff in the last 3 years regarding the treatment of children. In 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 the Department stated it could not provide the information requested due to privacy concerns although this was never an issue for many years between 2013 and 2020 through FOI and Budget Estimates. Given the data presented in 2020 did not allow identification of individuals, on what basis has the Department determined there are privacy concerns regarding the release of their information?
- (a) Could the Department provide details regarding all abuse complaints made against staff in the last 5 years regarding the treatment of children with a disability? (please provide the number, details and outcomes of complaints)

OOSH tendering process

- (45) How often does SINSW conduct “walk throughs” with providers at schools when an OOSH tendering process is underway?
- (46) How often does the Department request attendance information and financial information from OOSH providers?
- (a) How often does the department ask OOSH providers questions such as “what can we do to help you increase attendance”?
- (47) Parents have raised concerns with the lack of parent consultation during OOSH tendering processes, with many saying they were not aware it was happening until they found out the community or parent run service was being replaced by a corporate provider. What are the requirements for schools consulting with parents, regarding the costs, benefits and compliance history of different providers competing in the tender process?

- (48) What is the policy for managing the transfer of assets in OOSH services when a new provider wins a tender?

Training

- (49) How many staff have undertaken face-to-face disability training? Please provide the number, and as a percentage of total staff.
- (50) How many principals have undertaken face-to-face disability training? Please provide the number, and as a percentage of total principals.
- (51) How many principals have undertaken face-to-face training in legal requirements for child protection and abuse allegations? Please provide the number, and as a percentage of total principals.
- (52) Are either face-to-face training in legal requirements for child protection and abuse allegations; or face-to-face disability training, mandated for all staff to undertake?
- (53) The minister recently announced new curriculum packages to be introduced to support teaching staff. How much will these packages cost?
- (a) Are these purchased from a commercial provider?
- (b) How will the Department evaluate the quality of these packages?

Identifying and responding to domestic and family violence in schools

- (54) How will the Department of Education implement the domestic and family violence NSW Common Approach to Risk Assessment and Safety Framework (CARAS) to ensure school staff have the capability to identify domestic and family violence and assess or manage risk?

Consent and respectful relationships education

- (55) Early childhood settings, primary, and secondary schools have an essential role in preventing violence. What is the NSW Government doing to fund and support primary prevention initiatives in early childhood settings, primary, and secondary schools to address the drivers of sexual, domestic and family violence?
- (56) How much funding is allocated per school for respectful relationships education?
- (57) How will the NSW Government ensure a consistent, coordinated, and quality approach to consent and respectful relationships education across NSW schools, rather than an ad hoc approach?

- (58) Consent and respectful relationships education is most effective when it is ongoing and has a whole-of-school approach. Is the NSW Government implementing an ongoing and whole-of-school approach in early childhood settings, primary schools, and secondary schools?
 - (a) If not, why not?
- (59) What is being done to increase the capacity of schools and teaching staff to effectively deliver consent and respectful relationships as part of the curriculum?
- (60) What evaluation is being conducted to measure the capability of teaching staff to deliver consistent and ongoing consent and respectful relationship training?
- (61) Is there an evaluation process to measure the impact of consent and respectful relationships education in NSW schools?

PES

- (62) How many formal complaints are submitted annually to the Department, broken down by source and type?
- (63) What percentage of complaints are resolved in favour of the complainant, and what constitutes a 'resolved' case?
- (64) Has the Department ever conducted a post-satisfaction survey amongst complainants, and if so can they make this data public?
- (65) What action, if any, has the Department taken in response to repeated calls for independent oversight of PES or the Department from Royal Commissions, Audit NSW and Parliament?
- (66) Why does the Department maintain a complaints structure where the person complained about is often the one investigating the complaint?
- (67) What mechanism, if any, allows for community or parental feedback to influence the Department's policy on complaints handling?
- (68) What timeline does the Department envisage for reforming complaints processes, and will those reforms include independent oversight?
- (69) What percentage of cases are finalised within the Department's own time benchmarks (e.g. 3, 6, 9 months)?
 - (a) Since 2022, how many cases have exceeded the 9 month investigation timeframe?
- (70) How many staff have been suspended for more than 12 months pending a PES outcome?

- (71) How many PES investigators are currently employed, and how many have resigned in the past year?
- (a) Has investigator turnover contributed to delays, and what steps are being taken to ensure resourcing is adequate?
- (72) What is the current average caseload per investigator?
- (73) What is the average cost per investigation, and has this changed since the 2019 Tedeschi Review?
- (74) What is the annual budget allocation for PES, and has it increased or decreased since the 2019 Tedeschi Review?
- (75) What measures have been put in place since the 2019 review to prevent confirmation bias in investigations?
- (76) How does PES ensure procedural fairness for both the person subject of allegations and complainants?
- (77) What data does the Department provide to the NSW Ombudsman, ICAC or the Office of the Children's Guardian regarding PES investigations?
- (a) Has the Ombudsman raised concerns with the Department about PES investigation delays or fairness since the 2019 review?
- (78) How many PES findings have been overturned or varied by the NSW Ombudsman, ICAC, or the Industrial Relations Commission in the past three years?
- (79) Does PES publish anonymised case outcomes or data to help schools understand standards and precedent?
- (80) What systems are in place to ensure consistency of decisions across similar cases?
- (81) What safeguards exist to minimise psychological stress on staff under investigation?
- (82) Has PES undertaken any staff wellbeing impact assessments of its processes?
- (83) What feedback mechanisms exist for principals or staff who have experienced the PES process?
- (84) Which recommendations from the Tedeschi Review remain only "accepted in principle" rather than fully implemented, and why?
- (85) What role does the new case management system play in improving timeliness and consistency of investigations?

- (86) Has PES considered establishing a misconduct database to track patterns across cases?
- (87) How does PES explain its decision-making in controversial cases (e.g. restraint of students with disability, asbestos management incidents)?
- (a) In the case of the six-year-old student restrained in a high chair, why did PES determine that the conduct did not amount to misconduct?
- (88) How many staff subject to PES investigations have lodged workers' compensation claims for psychological injury since 2020?
- (89) What safeguards exist to minimise stress and psychological harm to staff under investigation?
- (90) How many principals have requested additional support in managing PES processes at their school?
- (91) Who approved the development of the NSW Department of Education document given to Directors Educational Leadership titled, "Paving the way forward to manage underperformance effectively: Professional and Ethical Standards, Employee performance, School Performance Capability Building Summit: Supporting Students Success through School Leadership, June 2021"?
- (a) Given that an industrially agreed Management of Conduct and Performance Policy already exists, why was this developed?
- (b) If this was not an official Department of Education document (according to the answer to question 102 received [20 December 2024](#)), why does the front page of the booklet and slideshow contain the words "NSW Department of Education" and display the NSW Government logo?
- (92) Under what legal or policy authority is the Department permitted to cease performance management proceedings before an employee has satisfactorily completed the process?
- (a) When performance management proceedings are ceased before completion, what happens to the employee's record?
- i. Does the Department treat the performance concerns as unresolved?
- ii. What safeguards exist to protect the employee from ongoing stigma or reputational damage?

- (b) If the Department stops performance management before an employee has satisfactorily completed the process, and if this action is not supported by any legislation or policy, does this not amount to an admission that the action was never warranted in the first place?
 - i. If not, why not?
- (93) Does the Department have a formal, enforceable policy governing, or procedures for, Expressions of Interest?
 - (a) Does the Department accept that the current unregulated EOI system causes psychological harm to staff left in limbo, and risks being used as a management tool to displace staff without fair process?
 - (b) Will the Department commit to developing a set of consistent procedures for Expressions of Interest?

Complaints handling

- (94) Under what section/s of the Complaints Handling and Procurement Policy is the Department authorised to engage former employees to manage complaints and reviews?
 - (a) Can the Department attest that for every engagement of a former employee, conflict of interest declarations were made and recorded, and that probity requirements were met?
 - i. If not, why not?
- (95) How much has the Department spent on engaging former employees over the past five years, and what were the outcomes of their complaints and reviews (supporting the Department vs the complainant)?
- (96) What safeguards are in place to ensure impartiality and psychological safety, when engaging former executives in complaint handling?
- (97) According to the answer to question 467 [received 24 March 2025](#), “assistance in the management of a small number of complaint reviews was provided between June 2023 and March 2024”. Can you confirm whether Ms Thorpe has ever been involved in any complaints management?
 - (a) Is Ms Thorpe still being engaged by the Department, either as an individual or as part of a company or agency?

- (98) Who within the Department decides how former colleagues are paid, at what rate, and under what Award or industrial arrangement are these payments made?
- (99) Are former employees required to provide written quotes in line with NSW procurement requirements?

RAW Practices

- (100) Can the Department confirm that HSSW officers are responsible for progressing conversations on RAW Plans, including resolving barriers and negotiating changes?
 - (a) What are the ramifications if they fail to do so?
- (101) Section 3 of the RAW Program states recovery planning is independent of PES, yet the Department confirmed PES involvement in RAW planning. How does the Department reconcile this contradiction, and what safeguards or independent oversight exist to ensure PES's disciplinary role does not compromise procedural fairness, health disclosures, recovery and rehabilitation, or psychological safety?
- (102) Given SIRA's 2024 TMF Report found 9 of 10 agencies had non-compliant return to work (RTW) programs (and the tenth agency was excluded), how was the Department's program assessed as compliant?

Section 51A transfers

- (103) What process exists to ensure staff subject to Section 51A transfers are fully informed, in writing, that they have no internal right of review and their only avenue is the Industrial Relations Commission or courts?
- (104) Why are there guidelines and panels for compassionate Section 51A transfers but not for non-compassionate (employer-initiated) transfers, given both are covered by the same legislation?
- (105) How does the Department ensure compliance with Section 51A(9), particularly the requirement that an employee consent or be given the opportunity to return before their substantive position is filled or the transfer exceeds 12 months?
 - (a) Has the Department ever breached this obligation, and if so what remedies were provided?
- (106) Is a formal WHS risk assessment undertaken for every employee moved under a Section 51A transfer?

- (a) Is the employee consulted and provided with a copy in every instance?

Unattached positions

- (107) What is the Department's definition of an "unattached" position, and is this descriptor referenced in any Act, Award, or Agreement?
- (a) On what legal basis are employees placed into this status?
- (108) How many staff have been designated "unattached" in the past five years?
- (a) What are the reasons for each?
- (b) On average how long have they remained in this status?
- (109) Who has the authority to place an employee into "unattached" status, and who monitors staff while in this position?
- (a) What rights of appeal or review are available to affected staff?
- (110) Is a formal WHS risk assessment undertaken for every employee moved into "unattached" status, and is the employee consulted and provided with a copy?

ECEC risk ratings

- (111) What are the names of the early childhood education and care services currently holding a high risk rating?
- (112) What are the names of the early childhood education and care services currently holding a very high risk rating?
- (113) How is a service's risk rating calculated?
- (a) What are the inputs and their respective weightings when calculating risk?

ECEC RA complaints

- (114) How many internal complaints have been made by staff working in the ECEC RA for each financial year from 2019/20 to 2024/25?

Questions from the Opposition

Box Hill School Development

- (115) Minister Houssos mentioned during initial hearings that there are "5 separate school projects underway" in Box Hill. What are these projects?

- (116) When asked why Lot 48 on Terry Road will no longer be acquired by Government for the purpose of new school development, it was stated that this area is one of flood-risk. Can the flooding reports be released?

Richmond Road and bridge upgrade

- (117) Minister, you stated in a joint media release dated 2 July 2025 that Stage 1 construction for the New Richmond Bridge project was expected to be completed in late 2026. According to the project timeline on the NSW Transport website, updated on the 22 July 2025 however, completion of stage 1 is now expected sometime in 2027. Can you explain why there has been a blowout in this timeline?
- (a) When in 2027 is that stage now expected to be completed?
 - (b) What impact is this expected to have on remaining stages of the project?
 - (c) How will you ensure that a cost blowout doesn't eventuate and that the project will be completed within the already allocated Federal and State funding?
 - (d) What date is the New Richmond Bridge expected to be completed?

Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure

- (118) Regarding the Western Sydney Airport Line (full extent north-south from Tallawong to Macarthur) when will the business cases for the north and south extensions be completed?
- (a) Will the Government commit to a timeframe for delivery?
- (119) Regarding stages 5a and 5b of the Mulgoa Road upgrade, when can the community expect the missing 2.2km section upgrade for the vital north south connection to the airport (due to be open for business in 2026) to be delivered?
- (120) What is the government's timeframe to complete the strategic business case for the Castlereagh Connection?

Independent Regulator and Reforms

- (121) Minister, in your 25 June press release you stated that New South Wales would "proceed immediately with nation-leading reforms to prioritise child safety over provider profit." What specific reforms were you referring to? How will you be prioritising child safety over provider profit?

- (122) You also indicated that amendments would be made to the Children’s Education and Care Services National Law to increase penalties for breaches. What will those penalty increases be?
- (123) You announced plans to amend the law to place children’s safety as the “paramount consideration.” What will this mean in practice for services and providers? They’re just words aren’t they Minister?
- (124) You committed to mandating the public release of compliance actions in the early childhood sector. Where will this information be published, and when will it become available?

Standalone Regulatory Agency

- (125) Minister, you have said that a new independent regulatory agency will be created with stronger powers and accountability. What specific powers will this agency have?
- (a) What accountability mechanisms will apply to this new regulator?
 - (b) When will the agency be established and operational?
 - (c) What budget has been allocated to establish and run this agency?
 - (d) What governance structure will be in place for the agency?
 - (e) Will the Minister issue directions to this agency, and how will it differ from the existing regulatory framework?

CCTV Installation

- (126) You have said the regulator may require services to install CCTV cameras where safety concerns arise. What thresholds or triggers will determine when cameras are required?
- (127) Do any early childhood services currently have regulator-mandated CCTV in operation?

Oversight of For-Profit Providers

- (128) In your press release you accused the former government of allowing for-profit providers to grow to two-thirds of the sector without adequate oversight. What evidence or data supports that claim?
- (129) What additional oversight measures have you introduced specifically for for-profit providers?
- (130) If you believe for-profit providers have grown without oversight, why is your government still approving their operation?

(131) Will your government move to close existing for-profit providers in the sector?

Weapons in Schools

(132) What measures is the Government taking to reduce weapons in our schools?

(133) One former principal suggested metal detectors as a potential option – what do you think of that?

(134) There were also 17 counts of self-harm with a weapon at school – what is the Government doing to ensure students have the right supports in place to prevent these self-harm incidents from occurring?

(135) We can see from the data – four of those incidents involved a knife – did any of them involve a firearm? If yes, how many?

(136) How many students have been suspended in 2025 for weapon related incidents?

(137) Can you provide a breakdown of what those incidents are and what kind of weapons were involved?

(138) Professor Cross's report notes that cyberbullying interacts with developmental systems at the individual, family, preschool and community levels. What specific actions is the government taking to address this? Are you working with other agencies, and what tangible measures have been implemented?

Bullying

(139) Are you aware of the work done by the NSW Mental Health Commission around students experiencing bullying in government schools? Why has this data not been updated since 6 September 2023?

(140) The 2023 data showed more than a quarter of primary and secondary students reported experiencing bullying in NSW government schools. What is Education doing to collect real-time data on bullying? Where is this information available, and how can parents access it?

(141) Can you advise whether the figures on bullying have improved since the 2023 release?

(142) In 2023, the data showed 29% of primary students and 28.4% of secondary students in government schools reported experiencing bullying. Have those figures improved, and what data is available for 2024?

(a) When will that data be publicly released?

(143) It appears the source of the Mental Health Commission data was the Department of Education's Tell Them From Me student survey. What were the results of the 2024 tell them from me survey in relation to bullying?

(a) Is that data publicly available and if so where?

(144) Can you confirm when the final results of the replacement NSW Public School Survey will be available?

Declining Student enrolments - Minister

(145) Minister, how many students are currently enrolled in New South Wales public schools? Can you provide the Committee with the latest data?

(146) Are you concerned about the continuing decline in public school enrolments across New South Wales?

(147) Can you provide any data on the shift of students from public to private or Catholic schools in the last two years?

(148) What impact is declining enrolment having on school budgets and staffing allocations?

(149) What specific measures is your government taking to attract more students into the public school system?

(150) Can you point to any evidence that these measures are actually working?

(151) You have said repeatedly that teacher pay and addressing workforce vacancies are the solution. Why have those measures not translated into improved enrolment numbers?

(152) Have you set enrolment growth targets for public schools? If so, what are they for 2026 and beyond?

(153) Will you commit today to setting clear, public enrolment targets for public schools and report annually to Parliament on whether they are being met?

(a) If not, how can parents have confidence that your government is serious about reversing the trend?

Politicisation of Schools

(154) Why was a federal Labor candidate (Zhi Soon, Candidate for Banks) included in a state government media release about NSW education infrastructure?

(155) Does the Minister believe it is appropriate to politicise school infrastructure upgrades by including federal election campaigning in a state government announcement?

(156) Can the Minister clarify whether NSW Education funding decisions are being influenced by federal election campaigning considerations?

Start Strong Pathways Program

(157) What funding allocation, if any, has been made in this Budget for the Start Strong Pathways Program?

(158) Can you confirm whether the program will continue beyond 31 December this year, or is it due to end?

(159) Has the Government committed to simply rolling over the existing program, or are there changes planned to its structure and delivery?

(160) When will the Department provide clarity to providers about the future of the program, given that organisations are already being forced into contingency planning?

(161) What assessment has been made of the impact on children, families, staff, and volunteers if the program is not continued in its current form?

(162) What specific analysis has the Department undertaken on the impact of losing playgroups in regional and rural areas, where they are often the only early childhood option available?

Foundational Supports & Budget Allocations

(163) What role does the Department of Education see itself playing as a lead agency in delivering foundational supports for children aged 0–9?

(164) What budget allocation has been made to support these foundational supports, particularly in partnership with other agencies such as DCJ, Health, and Aboriginal Affairs?

(165) How will these budget allocations support the intent of Minister Butler's recent comments on foundational supports resting heavily on ECEC and primary schools?

(166) What consultation has been undertaken with the ECEC sector and providers, such as playgroups, to inform the Department's approach to foundational supports in this Budget?

Asbestos in Schools

(167) How many asbestos inspections were conducted in NSW public schools in the last calendar year?

- (a) How many asbestos inspections were conducted in 2024?
- (b) How many asbestos inspections were conducted in 2023?
- (168) Of the inspections conducted, how many identified asbestos as present or requiring remediation?
- (169) How many schools in NSW currently contain asbestos?
- (170) How much was spent specifically on asbestos removal and remediation in schools in the past two financial years?
- (171) What is the total allocation for asbestos management in the 2025/26 Budget, and how does it compare to previous years?
- (172) Is the Government confident that the current inspection regime is adequate to protect student and staff safety?

Killara High School / Lindfield Learning Village: Local Enrolment Area

- (173) How was this change communicated to the impacted local community of Killara and Lindfield?
- (174) Just to clarify that the changes were not exposed due to a parent went on a website and sounded the alarm that led to a [SMH article on 3 March 2025](#)?
- (175) Do think it is acceptable that parents and students find out about these changes by seeing it on a website or reading it in the paper?
- (176) Was the original change of enrolment area to start in 2026?
- (177) Given that Lindfield Learning Village is an innovative education model, and Killara High is a traditional education model, shouldn't parents and students be given choice?
- (178) Like co-ed schools and single sex schools have joint enrolment areas, couldn't this also happen for Lindfield and Killara families and students?
- (179) Why were changes made for it now it start in 2028 instead of 2026, as reported in the [SMH on 4 March 2025](#)?
- (180) Why not make the joint enrolment area permanent?
- (181) When Lindfield Learning Village opened in 2019, was there are hard local enrolment area?
- (182) When did the Department of Education decide there would be hard enrolment areas for Killara and Lindfield?

- (183) In the case of a student who was in the now Lindfield Learning Village enrolment area who does not want an innovative education model, what are their options?
- (184) Could this push more families to walk away from public education, and choose independent and catholic schools?
- (185) In relation to the changes, was the Northern Sydney District Council of P&C Associations briefed?

Kambora Public School: Recess

- (186) Is the Department of Education considering putting Kambora Public School into recess? The school community believes a decision has already been made, with a [SMH article on 18 June 2026 stating they were “quietly abandoned”](#). Is that the case?
- (187) When was the last time a metropolitan primary school placed into recess?
- (188) When did the Department of Education see any warning signs in relation to enrolment at Kambora?
- (189) What actions did the Department of Education undertake to boost enrolments?
- (190) If Kambora does go into recess, how will other primary schools react that have had declining enrolments?
- (191) Is Kambora just the first school in what will become a trend of placing schools into recess?
- (192) To the Secretary, how would it feel to be a Secretary that had a Sydney primary school go into recess on your watch?
- (193) Would you agree that one reason for a declining enrolment was due to local enrolment areas not being enforced?
- (194) If yes, then why does the Department of Education have such strong local enrolment areas for Killara High and Lindfield Learning Village, but not for Kambora?
- (195) What is the current policy of local enrolment areas?

Data

- (196) How frequently is data updated within the New South Wales Department of Education?
- (197) Can you confirm that the data provided by the Department, particularly on the data.nsw.gov.au site, is always accurate?

- (198) Why does the publicly available website currently state there are around 2,000 support classes in public schools, while reporting in the Sydney Morning Herald today indicates there are actually about 4,000?
- (199) How do you explain this discrepancy in the data?
- (200) How can parents have confidence in publicly available education data if it is outdated or inaccurate?

Consent and respectful relationships education – the primary prevention of violence

- (201) Early childhood settings, primary, and secondary schools have an essential role in preventing violence. What is the NSW Government doing to fund and support primary prevention initiatives in early childhood settings, primary, and secondary schools to address the drivers of sexual, domestic and family violence?
- (202) Is the funding for violence prevention in education settings adequate? Why or why not?
- (203) How much funding is allocated per school for respectful relationships education?
- (204) How will the NSW Government ensure a consistent, coordinated, and quality approach to consent and respectful relationships education across NSW schools, rather than an ad hoc approach?
- (205) Consent and respectful relationships education is most effective when it is ongoing and has a whole-of-school approach. Is the NSW Government implementing an ongoing and whole-of-school approach in early childhood settings, primary schools, and secondary schools? If not, why not?
- (206) What is being done to increase the capacity of schools and teaching staff to effectively deliver consent and respectful relationships part of the curriculum?
- (207) What evaluation is being conducted to measure the capability of teaching staff to deliver consistent and ongoing consent and respectful relationship training?
- (208) Is there an evaluation process to measure the impact of consent and respectful relationships education in NSW schools?

Western Sydney

- (209) In a media release on the 21 August 2025, the Minns Labor Government announced \$63 million for infrastructure in Western Sydney. \$11.7 million of this funding is allocated to projects in Box Hill. This funding was collected through the fund formally known as the

Special Infrastructure Contributions (SIC) fund, paid for developers. Can you confirm how much funding remains from those contributions for Box Hill projects?

- (210) What funding is the Government going to provide to cover the shortfall in the developer contributions (CP15) arising from the capping of local developer contributions by the State Government?

Planning and Development for The Hills Shire Council

- (211) When is the NSW Government going to make a budget provision to support The Hills Shire Council, to recover from the decision to artificially cap developer contributions in the northwest sector where the budget deficit is currently around \$200M and growing?
- (212) Is there intention for the NSW Government to compensate Councils for the work they do assessing State Significant Development Applications?
- (a) *(If yes)* when is this likely to occur?
- (b) *(If no)* why not?
- (213) What is the cost per annum to the NSW taxpayer, when state government officials have to intervene after private certifiers have approved substandard buildings?
- (214) Is the NSW Government concerned about what the housing crisis means for the health of the Hawkesbury/Nepean River?
- (a) *(If yes)* What action is being taken to address these concerns?
- (215) Will the NSW Government consider contributing funds to Local Government Councils' for animal shelter facilities, given the current overcrowding being experienced throughout NSW?

Richmond Road and Bridge upgrade

- (216) Minister, you stated in a media release dated 2 July 2025 that Stage 1 construction for the New Richmond Bridge project was expected to be completed in late 2026. According to the project timeline on the NSW Transport website, updated on the 22 July 2025 however, completion of stage 1 is now sometime in 2027. Can you explain why there has been a blowout in this timeline?
- (217) When in 2027 is that stage now expected to be completed?
- (218) What impact is this expected to have on the remaining stages of the project?

(219) How will you ensure that a cost blowout doesn't eventuate and that the project will be completed within the already allocated Federal and State funding?

(220) What date is the New Richmond Bridge project expected to be completed?

Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure

(221) Regarding the **Western Sydney Airport Line** (full extent north-south from Tallawong to Macarthur) when will the business cases for the north and south extensions be completed?

(a) Will the Government commit to a timeframe for delivery?

(222) Regarding stages 5a and 5b of the **Mulgoa Road upgrade**, when can the community expect the missing 2.2km section upgrade for the vital north south connection to the airport (due to be open for business in 2026) to be delivered?

(223) What is the government's timeframe to complete the strategic business case for the Castlereagh Connection?

Penrith Beach

(224) Why has the government not committed funding for the permanent use of Penrith Beach for swimming and recreation uses to benefit the growing and underserved Western Sydney population?

Blacktown Hospital

(225) Minister, as you may be aware from media reports, patients have been photographed sleeping on the floor of Blacktown Hospital. At the time, the Premier was reported as saying that fixing this was a "top priority". How is the Government responding to this crisis in public health?

(226) Is the Government prepared to provide an immediate injection of funding?

(227) Is the Government reviewing the population boom in Greater Western Sydney and the current inadequate infrastructure associated with public health?

(228) What are the current bulk billing rates for GPs in Greater Western Sydney? Compare the rate over the last two years?

(229) What are the current mental health resources available in Greater Western Sydney? How many specialised doctors are available and required hospital resources and facilities

Greenfield Development

- (230) Minister on the front page of the SMH this week, it discusses the impact your government's levies and taxes are having upon development in the Western Suburbs, with developers saying it's no longer feasible to build large-scale projects in these areas. The article talks about the government's Transport-oriented development scheme and your low and mid-rise housing policies that are focused on density and infill, rather than greenfield developments that allow families to still have a backyard. The end result of turning your back on greenfield developments, as highlighted by the UDIA, is that the government is not delivering the housing volumes the public expects and the government has stated it would deliver. Is it the case that you are essentially abandoning greenfield developments – which provide families with the housing options they want – due to a lack of desire to make the requisite investments in infrastructure that are needed in this area?
- (231) You say that you don't want to leave communities stranded with no water, sewer services, or a lack of access to transport and roads. Isn't this then the case in Western Sydney that the government is failing to meet aspiring home buyers in Western Sydney?

Climate teaching

- (232) Mental health workers recognise that younger children may not be mature enough to fully comprehend the complex issue of climate change, making intensive teaching potentially harmful by inducing anxiety rather than constructive engagement. How is the Government responding?

Legal issues bulletin 55

- (233) Minister, I seek an update on the release of the revised Transgender students in schools, legal issues bulletin 55, LIB55. During the last Budget Estimates I was informed it was under review and was informed, "It's due term 1 this year."
- (234) Please explain the delay? What circumstances has led to the delay?
- (235) When will the revised legal issues bulleting 55m, LIB55, be released?

School Infrastructure

- (236) Has the NSW Education Department spoken to the NSW Planning Department about the impact of Government's housing reforms on Education sector?
- (237) Please document when the last discussion was held, when, where, who attended and what was discussed?

- (238) Please elaborate on the Minister's most recent visit to the Hills area. Where did she visit, when and who did she meet with.
- (239) What Schools in the Hills area has the Minister visited in the last 12 months?
- (240) What modelling has been done to calculate additional schools required as a result of low-to-mid rise and TOD precincts?
- (a) Please provide modelling per TOD precincts?
- (241) What do the results reveal for each TOD?
- (242) Does the NSW Education Department have concerns about the ability to keep up with the NSW Government's planning agenda?
- (243) Are there concerns about the ability of future governments to fund additional schools needed for booming population?
- (a) Any funds allocated to meet this additional educational need and requirement?
- (244) Is there an update regarding a new primary school at Hills Showground?
- (245) Any land sites identified or under review?
- (246) Does the Hills Shire have the most overcrowded schools in the State based on actual enrolments v capacity?
- (247) Is the NSW Education Department concerned that overcrowding in Hills Shire schools will become significantly worse?
- (248) Castle Hill High school is operating at over 200% capacity and has 50 demountables. What plans are there to address capacity issues at the school?
- (249) Has the department investigated options for another public high school in or near Castle Hill?
- (a) If not – why not?

Teacher vacancies

- (250) How does the Government response to a new survey of nearly 5000 primary and secondary teachers by the University of NSW that has found 90 per cent of teachers are experiencing moderate to severe levels of stress. Results also show more than two-thirds of Australian teachers experience moderate to severe symptoms of anxiety and depression – twice the national average. How is the Government responding?

(251) What efforts are in place to address teacher retention?

(252) Since 28 March 2023, have you met with the Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union (CFMEU) that was not disclosed in accordance with the Premier's Memorandum M2015-05 Publication of Ministerial Diaries and Release of Overseas Travel Information?

ETU meetings

(253) Since 28 March 2023, have you met with the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) that was not disclosed in accordance with the Premier's Memorandum M2015-05 Publication of Ministerial Diaries and Release of Overseas Travel Information?

Ministerial disclosures to The Cabinet Office

(254) On what date did you last update/make a ministerial disclosure to the Premier and the Secretary of The Cabinet Office?

Department(s)/Agency(s) Employees

(255) In relation to redundancies, will this be made available in your respective Department(s)/Agency(s) Annual Reports?

Department(s)/Agency(s) Annual Reports

(256) Do you have plans to print the 2024-25 annual report(s) for each department / agency in your portfolio?

(a) If yes, what is the budgeted expenditure for printing for each department / agency?

State Records Act

(257) Have you and your ministerial office had training and/or a briefing about the State Records Act from State Records NSW and/or The Cabinet Office and/or Premier's Department?

(a) If yes, when?

Department(s)/Agency(s) Gifts and Hospitality Register

(258) Does your portfolio department(s)/agency(s) have a gifts and/or hospitality register?

(a) If yes, is it available online?

i. If yes, what is the website URL?

Ministerial staff disclosure of gifts and/or hospitality

(259) Does your ministerial office keep a register of gifts and/or hospitality for staff to make disclosures?

(a) If yes, what is the website URL?

(260) Have any staff members in your office been the recipient of any free hospitality?

(a) What was the total value of the hospitality received?

(b) Are these gifts of hospitality declared?

Ministerial Code of Conduct

(261) Since 28 March 2023, have you breached the Ministerial Code of Conduct?

(a) If yes, what was the breach?

Senior Executive Drivers

(262) As at 1 August 2025, how many senior executives in your portfolio department(s) / agency(s) have a driver?

GIPA Act - Disclosure Log & Ministerial Offices

(263) Does your Ministerial Office have a disclosure log in accordance with the Government Information (Public Access Act) 2009?

(a) If yes, what is the URL?

GIPA Act - Disclosure Log & Departments/Agencies

(264) What is the website URL for the Government Information (Public Access Act) 2009 disclosure log each of your portfolio department(s) / agency(s)?

TikTok

(265) Are you on TikTok?

(a) If yes, do you access TikTok from a NSW Government device?

Signal

(266) Are you on Signal?

(a) If yes, do you access Signal from a NSW Government device?

- (b) If yes, does Signal comply with the State Records Act?

Training

(267) Since 28 March 2023, have you had training from an external stakeholder that included an invoice and payment paid for using your ministerial budget?

- (a) If yes, what is the description of training?
- (b) If yes, how much?

Parliamentary Secretary & Ministerial Vehicle

(268) Has your Parliamentary Secretary ever used a Ministerial driver from the pool?

- (a) If yes, why?

Media releases and statements

(269) Are all the ministerial media releases and statements issued by you publicly available at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases?>

- (a) If no, why?

Overseas Travel

(270) As Minister, do you approve overseas travel for public servants from your portfolio department(s)/agency(s)?

Data Breaches

(271) Does your portfolio department(s)/agency(s) keep a register of data breaches in accordance with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection (PPIP) Act?

- (a) If yes, what is the website?

Discretionary Fund

(272) As Minister, do you have a discretionary fund?

- (a) If yes, what department(s) / agency(s) administer it?
- (b) If yes, what is the website URL detailing expenditure?

Airline Lounges

(273) Are you a member of the Qantas Chairmans Lounge?

(274) Are you a member of the Virgin Beyond Lounge?

Ministerial Overseas Travel

(275) Since 28 March 2023, have you formally applied to the Premier to travel overseas?

(a) If yes, was this application accepted?

Private Jet Charter

(276) Have you travelled on a private jet charter in your Ministerial capacity?

(a) If yes, was this value for money for taxpayers?

Ministerial Office renovations

(277) Since 28 March 2023, has your Ministerial Office at 52 Martin Place been renovated?

(a) If yes, how much was the expenditure?

Conflict of Interest

(278) Since 28 March 2023, have you formally written to the Premier with a conflict of interest?

(a) If yes, why?