Education Ministers Meeting

5 November 2026

Communiqué

The Education Ministers Meeting (EMM) met on 2 November 2026.

Digital detox

Ministers discussed the need for a digital detox in Australian schools and agreed that technology adoption and the use of AI in schools should be evidence-based, purposeful and advance student learning and wellbeing. Ministers agreed that student use of technology should be restricted when it fails to support these purposes.

Ministers also agreed to introduce, trial or consider limits on screen use in schools and restrict the student use of Generative AI in primary schools and secondary student assessments, with states and territories, and sectors to determine implementation.

Ministers agreed to establish a new Australian Schools Digital Detox Taskforce (the Taskforce) to provide advice to Ministers on further practical actions that could be taken to address screen and digital device use. The Taskforce will be led by an independent expert with representatives from state and territory governments, the independent and Catholic education sectors, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation (NATSIEC), parent and principal associations, workforce representatives and the education agencies: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), Education Services Australia (ESA), Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). The taskforce will also seek advice and engage with students, teachers, schools, researchers and industry experts.

Ministers agreed that responding to these issues is a national priority, and that digital devices and AI will remain a standing EMM agenda item until at least the end of 2027, and will include consideration of advice from the Taskforce.

Mathematics curriculum reform

Ministers agreed to amend the Australian Curriculum: Mathematics Foundation to Year 2 mathematics, following the work conducted by ACARA. The revised mathematics curriculum will:

- refine content descriptions to enhance clarity and explicitly prioritise the essential knowledge, understanding and skills that students should learn;
- sequence content to ensure students develop key foundational mathematical concepts;
- align the achievement standards to the revised content; and
- clearly articulate the foundational mathematical concepts that support students to develop consumer and financial literacy in age-appropriate ways.

Ministers agreed to implement the revised mathematics content in schools from 2027 and be implemented by the end of 2029 with the year of implementation to be determined by individual jurisdictions.

ACARA will commence an iterative review of the Australian Curriculum: Years 3 to 6 mathematics curriculum, which will also include consumer and financial literacy.

Creation of the Australian Teaching and Learning Commission

Education Ministers agreed to establish an Australian Teaching and Learning Commission (the Commission) that will bring together, and build upon, the existing functions of ACARA, AITSL, AERO and ESA.

The Commission will bring together, in a single national agency, expertise in curriculum, assessment, teaching, teaching standards, research, evidence, data, technology and implementation support, making it easier to connect what we know works with the practical resources and support available to teachers and schools. This will deliver better support for teachers, school leaders, systems and sectors and help improve student results.

Detailed implementation arrangements will be worked through with the four national education organisations and other stakeholders over the coming months. This will ensure the continuity of important services and programs and support a smooth and orderly transition with a focus on agency staff wellbeing. The Commission will commence following passage of legislation in the Commonwealth parliament.

NAPLAN reform

Ministers agreed the Year 5 NAPLAN writing assessment will return to handwritten completion in 2028, subject to further advice from ACARA on the feasibility, costs and workload implications of implementation.

Ministers also agreed ACARA would provide advice on returning to handwritten NAPLAN writing assessments for Years 7 and 9, and providing advice on handwritten NAPLAN numeracy assessments for years 3 and 5.

Antisemitism, Islamophobia and social cohesion

Ministers agreed to reforms to the Australian curriculum to assist schools to prevent and address antisemitism.

Ministers agreed that implementation of these curriculum changes would begin from 2027 and be finalised by the end of 2029, with the year of implementation to be determined by individual jurisdictions.

Ministers were briefed on the progress of the Antisemitism Education Taskforce by the Chair Mr David Gonski AC and the Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism Ms Jillian Segal AO. Ministers were also briefed by the Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia Mr Aftab Malik.

Ministers welcomed ongoing efforts to strengthen social cohesion through education and look forward to this work being progressed by the Social Cohesion Education Advisory Council, which will be chaired by Mr Gonski to continue social cohesion initiatives.

Civics education reform

Ministers discussed the importance of civics and citizenship education and agreed to task ACARA with advising education ministers on incorporating Year 9 and 10 Civics and Citizenship content as core Australian Curriculum expectations for all students.

This would be subject to identifying existing content to be removed or streamlined and evaluating the impacts on teacher workload.

Reform of initial teacher education

In December 2023, Education Ministers introduced core content requirements for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs to strengthen teacher training in Australia. Core content, which is embedded in every ITE program that has enrolled students this year, is intended to ensure that everyone who studies teaching gains a deep understanding of how the brain and learning works, effective pedagogical practices, classroom management and responsive teaching.

Ministers heard from the Acting Chair of the ITE Quality Assurance Oversight Board, Professor Bill Louden, on the Board's work to quality assure implementation of the core content across the nation.

Ministers agreed to the ITE Data Dashboard being published on the AITSL website.

Ministers also considered the findings of the ITE Perceptions Survey, which will provide a baseline for measuring the impact of core content reforms in future years. This will be published on the Australian Government Department of Education website.

Consent and respectful relationships education

Education Ministers responded to the National Cabinet's tasking on Consent and Respectful Relationships Education (CRRE), reaffirming their commitment to a shared goal of ending violence against women and children, and agreeing to develop a five-year workplan (from 2027) informed by the evaluation of the current CRRE measure.

Ministers discussed the importance of a safe and respectful society and ways to strengthen the delivery of CRRE and considered the evidence and experiences in jurisdictions supporting a comprehensive whole-school approach to CRRE. The Australian Government is providing $77.6 million to states and territories and non-government school sectors to help schools invest in RRE tailored to their communities. This is being delivered in partnership with states, territories, and non-government school sectors.

First Nations Teacher and School Leader Strategy

Education Ministers considered the working draft of the First Nations Teacher and School Leader Strategy. The draft Strategy has been developed in consultation with First Nations education stakeholders, states and territories, and the non-government sector. It aligns with the objectives of the Closing the Gap National Agreement targets 5, 6 and 7, and the Better and Fairer Schools Agreements target to increase the number of domestic students enrolled in ITE who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander by 10 percentage points, by 2035.

The draft Strategy will be released for consultation, with NATSIEC, working with other First Nations peaks, leading consultation with First Nations stakeholders. The final Strategy will be brought back to EMM for consideration in 2027, prior to public release.

Equity in education

South Australia presented a paper on equity in education for Ministers' consideration. Ministers reaffirmed that a shared understanding of equity is necessary to provide a common foundation for national reform design. Ministers agreed on a shared understanding of equity, to be published following EMM, and noted it could be used to guide national decision-making and the

ongoing work of establishing the Commission and the National Enabling Initiatives under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement. Jurisdictions retain flexibility to determine their policy approaches.

Child safety update

Ministers considered findings from the National Assessment of CCTV use in ECEC settings (the Assessment). The Assessment was supported by an Expert Reference Panel comprising the Australian Federal Police (AFP), the Australian Centre for Child Protection (ACCP), as well as other privacy and surveillance experts, and was based on information collected from more than 300 services.

Ministers agreed to develop national best practice guidance.

Ministers also agreed to further reforms to strengthen supervision arrangements, including regulatory change to define factors relevant in determining and assessing whether supervision is adequate, and progressing the next stage of Working Towards Qualification reforms by developing a voluntary National Model Code for when educators working towards a qualification may be counted in educator-to-child ratios.

Early Education and Care Commission

Ministers were briefed on stakeholder consultation undertaken on a potential National Early Education and Care Commission (EEC Commission) since their initial decision to explore this reform in July 2026.

Ministers agreed that the purpose of the proposed national EEC Commission will be "*to improve outcomes for children by working with governments to provide national leadership to ensure the safety, rights and best interests of children are paramount, and strengthen transparency, accountability and public confidence in the ECEC sector through better evidence and insights into system performance, quality, safety, and outcomes*."

Ministers agreed to an approach to effective stewardship of the ECEC system, including shared principles and characteristics to guide how governments, a potential Commission and the sector could work together to steward the system.

Ministers also agreed-in-principle the key functions of a proposed national EEC including analytics and insights on supply and demand, market shape and workforce development, and a strategic approach to quality safety and regulation of the sector. Minister Clare and Minister Walsh have acknowledged on behalf of all Education Ministers the resignation of the current ACECQA Board Chair, Ms Annette Whitehead, and thanked her for her leadership and service. Education Ministers tasked officials with developing a proposal for a new ACECQA Board Chair.

Education Ministers will meet again in 2027.

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