



Education Ministers Meeting

20 February 2026

Communiqué

Education Ministers met at Warriappendi Secondary School in South Australia on 20 February 2026.

Addressing Antisemitism

Ministers were briefed on the work of the Antisemitism Education Taskforce by the chair David Gonski AC and Australia's Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism Jillian Segal AO. Ministers were updated on the Australian Government's response to the Special Envoy's Plan to Combat Antisemitism.

Ministers agreed to task the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to conduct a focused review of the Australian Curriculum to identify opportunities to strengthen its capacity to support: an understanding and rejection of all forms of antisemitic thought and antisemitic actions, a deep understanding of Jewish Australians' history and culture, and an understanding of Australian values.

Ministers also supported the development of a Social Cohesion Hub, to be developed by Education Services Australia (ESA). The Social Cohesion Hub will provide free resources to teachers, school leaders, and parents and carers to help students develop an understanding of antisemitism and strengthen understanding, inclusion and safety for all students. ESA have advised Ministers that the hub is planned to be operational by mid-2026.

Early Childhood Education and Care Safety

Education Ministers were briefed on progress on the Australian Government's \$189 million investment in child safety and confirmed that key safety reforms agreed in August 2025 are on track. These reforms include the rollout of mandatory child safety training for all early childhood education and care (ECEC) staff, the introduction of the National Early Childhood Worker Register, the national CCTV assessment, and commencement of tougher penalties under the revised National Regulations.

Ministers received the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority's (ACECQA) Rapid Assessment of Child Safe Practices and agreed to release it shortly.

NSW and Victoria will increase annual service fees by up to 10-fold for services owned by large for-profit providers, 5-fold for small for-profit providers and 3-fold for not-for-profit providers; to reflect increases in the volume, risk and complexity of regulatory activities. Ministers agreed to increase annual service fees in all other jurisdictions (other than Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory) by 10 per cent on top of annual indexation from 1 July 2026. In New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania it is intended that revenue from fee increases will be paid to the relevant Regulatory Authority to support effective regulation of quality, safety and compliance in ECEC.

Ministers reviewed progress on the Child Safety Review recommendations and agreed that a biannual status report will be published on ACECQA's website.

Coronial Inquest into the death of Ebony Thompson

Education Ministers acknowledged the tragic events in the Northern Territory that resulted in the death of Ebony Thompson. Ministers expressed their deepest condolences to Ebony Thompson's family. Ministers noted the recommendations from Coronial Inquest and the actions taken by the Northern Territory in response. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to further reforms to supervision practices and fencing safety, informed by the recommendations of the Inquest.

Next Steps to Address Bullying in Schools

Ministers agreed to the 'National Framework for Addressing Bullying in Australian Schools'. Ministers agreed to scope out the development of the anti-bullying resource hub, by their next meeting. Ministers also agreed to work on opportunities to strengthen anti-bullying efforts through initial teacher education.

All government and non-government schools will embed the expectations of the National Framework (or an equivalent, contemporary jurisdiction-specific framework) in their policies and procedures by Term 1 2027, and all schools will make their anti-bullying policies publicly available.

The [Implementation Plan](#) details the staging and timeline for actions to deliver on Ministers shared commitment to ensure that every Australian school is a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment. The plan will be periodically reviewed and updated as implementation progresses.

Thriving Kids

The Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Ageing and Minister for Disability and the National Disability Insurance Scheme, briefed Ministers on Thriving Kids - the national system of supports for children aged 8 and under with developmental delay and/or autism with low to moderate support needs, and their families, carers and kin. Thriving Kids supports will be available in settings where children live, learn and play. Jurisdictions are planning what supports will be available in each state and territory, mindful of the need to ensure supports do not take time away from children's learning.

Australian Curriculum reform: Foundation to Year 2 Mathematics

Ministers agreed to task ACARA to commence the iterative review of the Foundation to Year 2 mathematics curriculum.

The review will strengthen the curriculum through targeted refinements and clarifications. The updated curriculum will provide teachers greater support and clarity about what students need to learn at each year level, specific content prioritisation and sequencing, and include explicit content on foundation consumer and financial literacy.

ACARA will provide the outcome of the review, including advice on strengthening the curriculum, to Ministers in the third quarter of 2026.

A new Teaching and Learning Commission

Education Ministers reaffirmed their in-principle agreement to bring together and build upon the existing functions of ACARA, AITSL, AERO and ESA into a Teaching and Learning Commission.

Ministers agreed to embed equity as a foundational consideration in the establishment of the Teaching and Learning Commission. Ministers were briefed on the work of the Commission Working Group and agreed final advice would be presented at the next meeting of Education Ministers.

Education Ministers agreed the Working Group will be extended until the end of 2026.

Education Ministers thanked the staff of ACARA, AITSL, AERO and ESA for their professionalism and commitment to Australian schooling and acknowledged the importance of maintaining focus on the agencies' workplans and functions.

First Nations Teacher and School Leader Strategy

Ministers received an update on the development of the First Nations Teacher and School Leader Strategy (the Strategy), being undertaken through the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan. The Strategy is being developed in consultation with First Nations stakeholders and in partnership with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation (NATSIEC) and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Principals Association (NATSIPA).

Ministers will consider the Strategy at their next meeting.

Progress on National Reform

Education Ministers recognised the strong progress made nationally to implement reforms under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreements and discussed the outlook for further reforms in 2026.

Education Ministers were briefed on educational equity issues in schooling and considered national approaches to respond. Ministers agreed that a shared understanding of educational equity and its relationship to concentration of disadvantage is required to provide a common foundation for national reform design. Ministers also agreed to embed equity as a consideration in current and future national reform commitments, resourcing and accountability settings.

Ministers thanked Warriappendi Secondary School for hosting EMM.

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