

# 2025 SASPA Annual Report

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Empowering secondary public school leaders through collaborative advocacy

# Contents

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**We acknowledge the traditional owners throughout South Australia and we pay respect to the custodians of the lands on which we live and learn. We respect their spiritual relationship with Country and acknowledge that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still as important to those living today and we do so in the spirit of reconciliation.**

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# Introduction

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**Empowering secondary public school leaders through collaborative advocacy**

The South Australian Secondary Principals' Association (SASPA) is an incorporated body with a membership of leaders of secondary education in the public system.

SASPA operates as a professional service provider and education policy advocate working through its peak body, the Australian Secondary Principals' Association (ASPA), nationally and with the employing agency, the Department for Education, locally.

This Annual Report represents an account of the activities of SASPA from 1st January to 31st December 2025, and includes the Chief Executive's Report, the President's Report and the general-purpose operational activity.



# Chief Executive's Report



**Kirsty Amos**  
Chief Executive

**SASPA has continued to empower secondary school leaders and their communities through collective agency throughout 2025. With multiple requests to speak with media and a seat at the table in high-level decision-making forums, we continue to be a leading voice in South Australian Secondary education. As such I am pleased to present an overview of SASPA's activities and achievements over 2025.**

The year saw us consolidate our progress in achieving our Strategic Plan, steadily building momentum and influencing the multiple reviews initiated by the Department, SACE, State and Federal governments.

As a direct result of SASPA's collaborative advocacy in 2025, I highlight the following:

- Our sustained and successful media campaign *Our Schools: It Takes a Team – everyone has a part to play in making public schools great places to learn and grow*. The campaign promotes all that is working well in schools, focussing on the extended team resulting in student success in all of our schools. A key feature has been collaboration with schools and highly positive community engagement, reinforcing a shared narrative of pride in public education
- A strong suite of professional learning opportunities that brought leaders together to learn from and with each other, grounded in current research and strengthened by our collective agency. Our conference, keynote speakers, First Tenure Principal Network, twilight sessions, ASPA offerings and the LIFT program all created valuable spaces for connection, shared practice and professional growth. Across workshops, data and contemporary education series, school-led sessions and research-informed webinars, leaders deepened their expertise and worked together to drive improvement across the system. These opportunities truly highlighted the strength and impact of our connected leadership community.
- High level advocacy in regard to Anti-Bullying Rapid Review, Impact of Negative Media, Index of Educational Disadvantage, Infrastructure, Staff Wellbeing, Band A Reforms, Inclusive Education Amendment Bill, Enrolment and Attendance Amendment Bill

# President's Report



**Eva Kannis-Torry**  
President, SASPA

Principal, Thebarton  
Senior College

**It is my great pleasure to provide members with reflections on the work undertaken by the SASPA Board throughout 2025.**

Across the year, the Board and Executive met regularly, maintaining a strong focus on SASPA's 2024–2026 Strategic Agenda and deepening our collaboration with the Department for Education. As in previous years, our meetings were joined by Chief Executive Martin Westwell, Minister Blair Boyer and senior departmental leaders, enabling rich, forward-focused conversations that shaped the system settings our schools operate within.

Under our **Voice** pillar, we formed a SACE advisory working group to strengthen public school representation in the Thrive and subject renewal agenda and established the *Our Schools* media campaign, amplifying positive leader narratives with strong ministerial support.

In **Support**, we ensured principal perspectives actively influenced the operationalisation of the Public Education Strategy. Through direct engagement with senior DfE leaders; including Martin Westwell, Peter Kelly, Ben Temperley, Marina Elliot, Caroline Fishpool and Chris Bernardi, we reinforced that secondary leaders are system shapers, not merely implementers.

Our commitment to **Equity** saw the development of SASPA's election letter and continued advocacy, highlighting the need for fair funding, infrastructure investment and wellbeing resourcing.

Within **Contemporary Practices**, we promoted principle-based, context-responsive policies that enable trust and autonomy. This included advocating for simplified workforce structures, digital efficiency tools and flexible leadership models that reflect each school's unique context.

Our **Celebration** pillar remained a highlight. The *Our Schools: It Takes a Team* campaign strengthened grassroots recognition of public secondary schools, while our conference, twilight sessions, research partnerships and SNG meetings showcased innovation across the sector. Growing membership again signalled strong trust in and appreciation of SASPA's collective agency.

The Board is immensely proud of the collective progress made in 2025. My sincere thanks go to each Board member for their commitment and insight. Together with our Strategic Network Groups and our engaged membership, we have amplified our influence and strengthened our advocacy for South Australia's public secondary leaders.

Thank you for the courage, clarity and compassion you bring to your leadership. Together, we continue to make a profound difference for our schools, our system and most importantly, our students.

# About SASPA

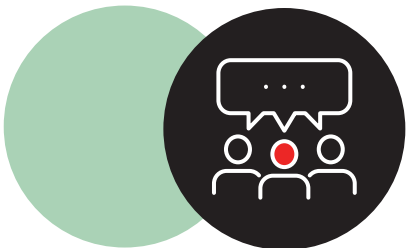
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## Who we are:

We are school leaders with a diverse range of expertise and experience in SA Public schools with secondary enrolments who:

- Share a mutual commitment to strengthening public secondary education in secondary schools
- Build and maintain relationships with key education stakeholders to advocate for policies, programs and systems that provide the highest quality education for all students



## What we do:

We shape, inform and influence education initiatives by working collaboratively with key education stakeholders and decision makers.

- We develop our agenda and services with regular engagement and feedback from our members
- We develop leaders by providing opportunities to learn from and with each other, connecting to current research and leveraging collective efficacy
- We provide high level intelligence and expertise that enables key decision makers to better understand how to deliver successful initiatives



## How we do it:

- We celebrate and share good practice across our membership
- We build and maintain respectful relationships to have maximum influence and opportunities to collaborate
- We build networks and work collectively to contribute to a public education system which enables young people to learn and thrive

# Strategic Network Groups



## Workforce

SASPA is committed to working collaboratively with the Department for Education to realise the ambition of having quality teaching in every classroom and in every school. This includes strategic revisions to policies, procedures and practices to improve the supply and professional growth of leaders, teachers and SSO's.



## Teaching & Learning

SASPA is committed to an authentic working partnership with the Department for Education and SACE Board for the provision of inclusive, ethical and high-quality curriculum, pedagogy and assessment design in secondary schools.



## Leader Development

SASPA is committed to working collaboratively with the Department for Education & SACE Board to provide opportunities for high quality professional learning experiences that aim to improve leader capacity to impact positively on student learning and teacher professional growth.



## Inclusion & Wellbeing

SASPA is committed to working collaboratively with the Department for Education on improvements to those systems, policies, procedures, and practices that enable leaders to develop and sustain more inclusive approaches to secondary schooling.



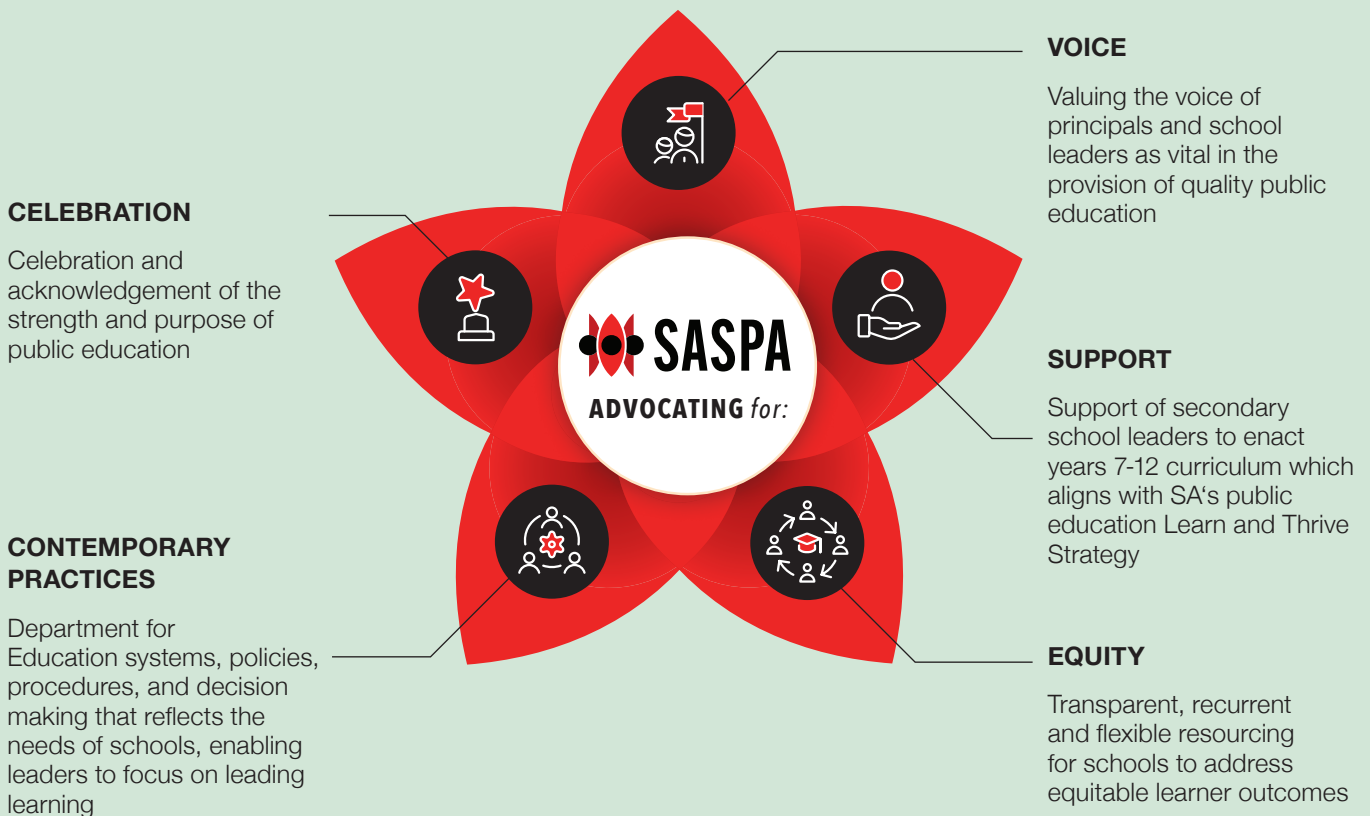
## Digital Systems & Technologies Reference Group

SASPA is committed to supporting school leaders in harnessing digital systems and technologies to benefit students, families, and staff, advocating for policies and programs that meet the needs of public secondary schools, and ensuring equitable resources to achieve fair and positive outcomes for all learners.



# 2024-2026 Strategic Agenda

## Empowering secondary public school leaders through collaborative advocacy





# VOICE

Valuing the voice of principals and school leaders as vital in the provision of quality public education.

### Advocacy and Representation:

Activated a strategy to reshape the narrative describing public schools and leaders through the *Our Schools: It Takes a Team* media campaign, after securing Ministerial and DfE support.

Led two co-constructed research projects on members' behalf - *Pathways to Principalship* and *The Impact of Negative Media* - with actionable recommendations to be provided to the Department (DfE) early in 2026.

### Engagement with DfE Directorates:

Delivered targeted member feedback and facilitated regular feedback loops with senior executives shaping key workstreams, including but not limited to *Empowering Educators to Thrive*, Impact of Negative Media, HR responsiveness, ECT induction, the Leadership Capability Framework, SA Curriculum prototyping and Inclusive Teaching & Learning.

### Sharing Information and Resources:

Enabled timely access to updates from SACE, Curriculum, Teaching & Learning and key project leads, ensuring schools remained informed of current system initiatives.

## 2025 Supporting Actions

**16**  
meetings & events with SA Minister for Education, Skills & Training

**10**  
meetings & events with Chief Executive Department for Education

**3**  
meetings with Shadow Minister for Education

Representation on  
**11**  
Reference Groups

**3**  
letters to Government and opposition re Election Promises Infrastructure and Wellbeing

**4**  
letters to State and Federal governments providing stakeholder perspectives on Federal and State legislative reform (Education Act, Anti-bullying Rapid Review and Food Security)

**98%**  
of target secondary schools represented in SASPA membership.





# SUPPORT

Support of secondary school leaders to enact years 7-12 curriculum which aligns with SA's public education Learn and Thrive Strategy.

### Peer-to-Peer Networking and Collaboration:

Facilitated member networks and forums to share experiences, provide feedback, and influence leadership, wellbeing, inclusion, and curriculum initiatives.

### Engagement with DfE Senior Level Leaders:

Maintained direct dialogue with CE, Deputy CE, Directors, and Assistant Directors to ensure principal perspectives shaped *Empowering Educators to Thrive*, workforce design, site classification, and leadership capability framework.

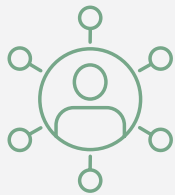
### Sharing Resources and Experiences:

Enabled timely access to updates from SACE, Curriculum, Teaching & Learning and key project leads, ensuring schools remained as informed of current system initiative as possible.

### Engagement with SACE Board and Senior Level Leaders:

Strengthened principal voice in public education through ministerial engagement, formal submissions, media campaigns, advisory and national forums.

## 2025 Supporting Actions



**32**

Strategic Network Group meetings with **169** members from **66** schools



**19**

professional learning and networking events



**296**

participants in *Equitable Excellence: Context Matters* conference



**36**

school-based leaders involved in *LIFT* program



**11**

business partners





# EQUITY

Transparent, recurrent and flexible resourcing for schools to address equitable learner outcomes.

### Election and Funding Advocacy:

Developed SASPA election platform and ongoing submissions promoting need-based, transparent, and recurrent funding, infrastructure investment, and wellbeing support.

### Equity in Diverse and Regional Schools:

Highlighted contextual funding needs, supporting resource-sharing models, low-cost technology solutions, and equitable access to curriculum and professional learning across rural, small, and specialist schools.

### Workforce Support:

Advocated for funding and policy improvement for inclusive learning, leadership development, workforce sustainability, the wellbeing of school leaders, and equitable access to digital systems and technologies.

## 2025 Supporting Actions



**10**

SNG Co-convenors representing Deputy Principals, Assistant Principals and Country members



Continuation of *Equitable Excellence Trilogy Conference* theme



Continued to advocate for improved IESP processes

### SASPA school/site representation consists of:



**41.5%**

country schools and sites



**4%**

cat 1 schools/sites



**17%**

cat 2 schools/sites

As per semester 1 2025 data





# CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES

Department for Education systems, policies, procedures, and decision making that reflects the needs of schools, enabling leaders to focus on leading learning.

## Led two co-constructed research projects

on members' behalf — *Pathways to Principalship* and *The Impact of Negative Media on Leaders* — with actionable recommendations to be provided to the DfE.

## Promoting Principle-Based, Context-Responsive Policies:

Advocated for flexible, trust-based DfE processes that enable school leaders to focus on learning and teaching.

## Streamlining Workforce and Systems:

Supported *Empowering Educators to Thrive* consultations including development of AI and digital tools to reduce administrative burden and improve efficiency.

## 2025 Supporting Actions



6

twilight sessions exploring doing school differently and data in schools



2

research papers focusing on support for emerging leaders and current leaders in schools



287

*Pathways to principalship* survey responses



84

Focus Group attendance



94

media survey responses



26

schools shared practice through SASPA member networks



5

*Empowering Educators to Thrive* working group and workshops attended





# CELEBRATION

Celebration and acknowledgement of the strength and purpose of public education.

### Our Schools – It Takes a Team Campaign:

Developed and launched a media and grassroots campaign celebrating public school success and reclaiming the narrative of school leadership.

### Showcasing Innovation and Practice:

Highlighted public education achievements through conferences, Twilight Sessions, Strategic Network Group meetings, research partnerships, and the Next Generation Learners program.

### Acknowledgement and Celebration:

Opened events with Acknowledgment of Country, incorporated Kaurua language, and recognised leaders' contributions via newsletters, awards, and SASPA platforms.

### Sharing and Collaboration Across Schools:

Promoted peer learning through digital practice sharing, cross-site mentoring, and inclusive wellbeing initiatives, strengthening collaboration and collective professional expertise.

## 2025 Supporting Actions



**79%**

increase in followers across all social media platforms



**9**

schools facilitating a Breakout session at 2025 Conference



**15**

schools presenting as part of SASPA events across the year



**110**

participants at SASPA End of Year Dinner event



**88**

stories shared from schools/sites as part of our media campaign



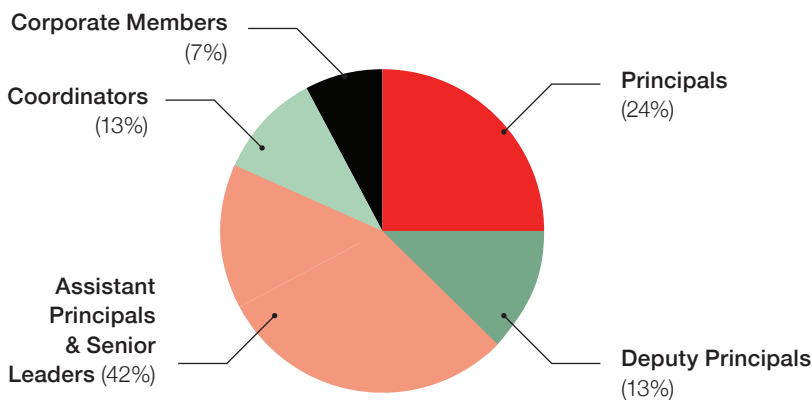
**17**

media appearances across television, newspaper and radio interviews

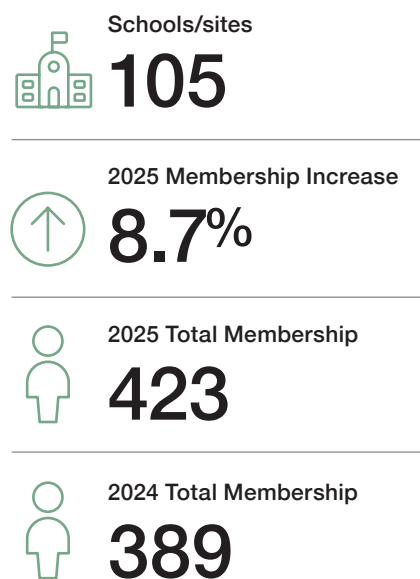


# Operations

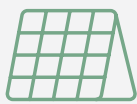
## 2025 SASPA Membership by Position Title



## Membership Numbers



## Professional Learning



**19**

SASPA Professional learning and networking dates in total reaching **882** participants



**296**

Conference attendees including **19%** country members and **22%** first time registrants



**36**

**SASPA LIFT Program** participants, supporting emerging school leaders

## Facilitated Educator Networks



**32**

Strategic Network Group meetings held over 2025, consisting of:



**169**

Members



**66**

Schools

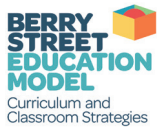


with **16**

Country schools represented

# Business Partners

## Gold Business Partners



## Silver Business Partner





**South Australian Secondary  
Principals' Association**

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4 Milner Street  
Hindmarsh SA 5007  
08 8463 5810