



Simon Birmingham

Federal Minister for Education and Training

Simon Birmingham has served as a Liberal Party Senator for South Australia since May 2007 and in September 2015 was appointed to position of Minister for Education and Training.

Simon grew up near Gawler in Adelaide's north on his family's small horse agistment property. Simon was educated at government schools before going on to study at the University of Adelaide where he completed a Masters of Business Administration.

Prior to entering the Senate, Simon worked for a number of industry bodies, establishing particular experience in the wine, tourism and hospitality sectors – industries that are critical to South Australia's prosperity.

After less than three years in the Senate Simon was appointed to the Shadow Ministry, serving as Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for the Murray-Darling Basin and the Environment until the 2013 election.

Following the change of government in 2013 Simon served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment, with responsibility for water policy, including the Murray-Darling Basin, National Parks and the Bureau of Meteorology. In 2014 Simon was appointed to serve as the Assistant Minister for Education and Training in the Abbott Ministry, with specific responsibility for vocational education, apprenticeships, training and skills.

He is married to Courtney and has two young daughters, Matilda and Amelia. Simon is an active supporter of the Parliamentary Association for UNICEF and a proud, but sometimes frustrated, Adelaide Crows fan.



Dr Pete Goss
School Education Program Director
Grattan Institute
Beyond Gonski 2.0 – What next?

Dr Pete Goss has over 10 years' experience as a strategy consultant, most recently with the Boston Consulting Group, advising Federal and State governments on service delivery innovation. Dr Goss has worked with Noel Pearson to improve education outcomes for Cape York primary school students, and advised the Federal Government on the future of international education in Australia.



Tony Cook PSM
Associate Secretary for Schools and Youth.

Before joining the department in October 2011, Mr Cook held several senior executive positions in Victoria, including Deputy Secretary, Government and Corporate with the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Deputy Secretary, Office for Children and Portfolio Coordination, and Deputy Secretary, Office for Planning, Strategy and Coordination within the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Mr Cook began his career with Education Queensland.

Mr Cook is a registered primary school teacher. He has been a deputy principal and has taught in schools and preschools in Queensland and the United Kingdom. Mr Cook holds a Bachelor of Education from the Queensland University of Technology with a major in early childhood education.

In October 2013 Mr Cook was made an Honorary Fellow of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders and in January 2014, he was awarded a Public Service Medal for outstanding public service, especially in driving schools policy and funding reform in Australia.



Dr Phil Lambert PSM

Our Watch

Respectful Relationships Education

Phil Lambert has extensive experience in education as a principal, inspector, policy director, Assistant Director-General and Regional Director. He has authored and co-authored books and presented a number of papers and keynote speeches at State, national and international conferences covering a range of topics.

Phil has a MEd in Educational Administration and Management and in 2001 completed his doctorate at the University of Sydney. In 2006 he was conferred Adjunct Associate Professor. He is also a Fellow of both the Australian College of Educators and the Australian Council for Educational Leaders.

Phil has overseen a number of major policy initiatives in NSW in early childhood, primary education, rural education and Aboriginal education. These initiatives include the delivery of distance education to isolated students using satellite computer-based technologies, the NSW review of Aboriginal Education, the expansion of preschools in government schools and the class size reduction program.

Phil has been a member of a number of high level committees, taskforces and boards. He is currently a Board member of the Australian Children's Television Foundation and the Dean's Advisory Board at the University of Sydney. Phil served as Chairperson of the South-East Sydney and Inner West Senior Officers Group from 2004-2008 and was the foundation Chair of the Human Services and Justice Metropolitan Regional Network of Senior Government Officers. He is Patron of the Early Childhood Education Council and a White Ribbon Day Ambassador.

Since his appointment as Regional Director, Sydney Region has recorded significant increases in student enrolments and retention, record performances in external examinations and outstanding achievements in the arts and sport.



Bronwyn Lee

Deputy CEO, Foundation of Young Australian

The New Work Smarts

Bronwyn is Deputy CEO at the Foundation for Young Australians (FYA). FYA is committed to young people, their futures and the contribution they can make to

Australia and informs the national agenda on the issues that most affect them.

Bronwyn is passionate about redefining the role of young people in our society and how the not-for-profit sector can drive social innovation in Australia. She has a deep practical and theoretical knowledge of the community sector, with over fifteen years' experience working in non-profits. She is also currently a Non-Executive Director at the International Women's Development Agency and a Board Member at the Australian Youth Climate Coalition.

Prior to FYA, Bronwyn led the 40 Hour Famine at World Vision Australia.

Bronwyn holds a Master's degree in Applied Anthropology and Participatory Development in addition to a Bachelor of Commerce.



Dr Tanya Vaughan

Evidence for Learning

Social Ventures Australia

Evidence and Equity

Tanya is responsible for the marketing, product development, community leadership and strategy for Evidence for Learning.

Tanya has worked in education in policy design, implementation and evaluation in key Australian organisations including AITSL and PAI. She has consulted on international and national projects in leadership in education and evaluation with Learning First and Educational Transformations. She was lead consultant in investigating the impact of programs in the arts on outcomes for students in highly disadvantaged settings which resulted in a book for the international market.

Tanya is an Honorary Fellow at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) at the University of Melbourne. Tanya holds a Bachelor of Science (Monash University), Bachelor of Education (Queensland University of Technology), Professional Certificate in Instructional Leadership (MGSE) and Doctor of Philosophy (Griffith University).



Lisa Rodgers

AITSL

Teaching Standards and Education Excellence – TEMAG

Lisa Rodgers was appointed CEO of AITSL in October 2016, following an extensive national and international search.

Since starting in the role, Lisa has become an emerging leader and voice in Australian education, refocusing the conversation towards the importance of quality education, esteeming the profession and prioritising proven teaching strategies that positively impact student learning in the classroom.

To gain a stronger understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the education community, Lisa has met with education ministers, system and sector leaders, and teachers and school leaders across Australia. She is also working closely with stakeholders to improve student learning.

Before joining AITSL, Lisa was Deputy Secretary, Early Learning and Student Achievement in the New Zealand Ministry of Education, with responsibility for raising achievement and improving system effectiveness with school leaders across education and the wider social sector. Prior to this, she was Deputy Secretary, Evidence, Data and Knowledge, using research and analysis to identify where effort and resources can best help lift student achievement.

Lisa has held several other significant posts at the Ministry and a background in strategic policy, research and insights analysis with the Ministry of Justice, the University of Wales and the British Army.



The Hon Susan Ryan AO

Former Age Discrimination Commissioner and Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission

Former ACSSO Vice President

Susan Ryan was appointed as Australia's first Age Discrimination Commissioner on 30 July 2011 for a five-year term.

In addition, she was appointed Disability Discrimination Commissioner, 12 July 2014. She concluded both terms 28 July 2016.

As Australia's first Age Discrimination Commissioner she was highly effective in drawing attention to the extent of discrimination against older people.

She commissioned pioneering research into ageism and disability discrimination and conducted the first national enquiry into workplace discrimination against older Australians and Australians with disability.

This resulted in the landmark report *Willing to Work*, which sets out national strategies to improve the economic participation of Australians as they age and people with disability.

Up until her appointment as Commissioner, Susan was the Independent Chair of the IAG and NRMA Superannuation Plan; pro chancellor and Council member at UNSW from 1999 to 2011; chaired the Australian Human Rights Group 2008-2011, and was Women's Ambassador for ActionAid Australia.

She was CEO of ASFA, the Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia from 1993-1998, and President of AIST, the Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees from 2000 to 2007. She was a founding member of Australian Council for Superannuation Investors and of the ASX Corporate Governance Council.

From 1975 to 1988, Susan was Senator for the ACT, becoming the first woman to hold a Cabinet post in a federal Labor Government. She served in senior portfolios in the Hawke Government as Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women and Special Minister of State.

As Education Minister, Susan saw school retention rates double and universities and TAFEs grow significantly. She pioneered extensive anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation, including the landmark Sex Discrimination Act 1984 and the Affirmative Action Act 1986.

She was awarded an AO for services to the Australian parliament in 1990. She has been awarded honorary doctorates from Macquarie University, University of Canberra, University of South Australia and the University of New South Wales.



Charlene Smith

Mitchell Institute

Early Childhood and Parent Engagement

Dr Charlene Smith is a passionate advocate for the role of education in achieving equity and social inclusion, with a commitment to collaborative, evidence-based approaches to policy development and analysis. In her previous role as General Manager – Projects and Collaboration with the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, she led a diverse team to deliver research-informed policy advice to federal and state governments. Her advisory areas included parent engagement in school education, the role of data in design, delivery and evaluation of social services, and the need for effective responses by both the education and health systems to prevent educational disadvantage for students experiencing school absence due to illness or injury.

Dr Smith has extensive experience in building and sustaining collaborative partnerships, including the right@home consortium between ARACY, the Centre for Community Child Health, and Western Sydney University. She completed a PhD with the Australian National University in 2007, and is currently studying a Graduate Diploma in Psychology at the University of New England.



Hilary Dixon

ACARA

Curriculum: Supporting Parents.

Ms Hilary Dixon commenced as Senior Manager, Curriculum at ACARA in July 2016 before taking on, very recently with Dr Fiona Mueller's resignation, the role of Director, Curriculum. Prior to these appointments Hilary was Academic Deputy at Cranbrook School from 2002, with firsthand experience of ensuring the alignment of curriculum with state

and national requirements in a K-12 setting, including the implementation of the International Baccalaureate. Her career began as a teacher of French and German with the NSW Department of Education.

After a decade of working in secondary schools, Hilary joined the Assessment Branch of the NSW Board of Studies, then becoming an Inspector of Schools in Curriculum Branch in 1999. She has been an active participant in programmes with the Association of Independent Schools (NSW and SA), the Association of Heads of Independent Schools and the International Baccalaureate Organisation, contributing regularly to national and international workshops and conferences on curriculum reform, leadership in schools, teacher appraisal and development, gender in education and the use of data to inform pedagogy.



Dr Lyndal Groom

Branch Manager, Student Participation Branch, Improving Student Outcomes Group

Australian Government Department of Education

Parent Engagement – Australian Government Perspective

Dr Lyndal Groom is the Branch Manager, Student Participation Branch in the Improving Outcomes Group.

Lyndal's responsibilities cover parent engagement, student needs, Indigenous strategy and student inclusion including programs such as the National School Chaplains, Safe Schools, the Learning Hub, the Student Wellbeing Hub, respectful relations and countering violent extremism.

Prior to her current role Lyndal was the Branch Manager, International Strategy in the International Group at the Australian Government Department of Education and Training. From 2015, she led the development of Australia's first National Strategy for International Education 2025 (National Strategy) and

formed the first Coordinating Council for International Education to assist the department in implementing the National Strategy.

Lyndal has held roles in the Higher Education Group where she had responsibility for managing a number of tertiary education programmes primarily dealing with funding arrangements under the Higher Education Support Act 2003. She also served as the Executive Director of the Australian Qualifications Framework Council.



Phillip Spratt

Australian Council of State School Organisations

President

Reflections and Directions

Phillip is a facilitator, teacher and experienced representative and advocate.

He represented the UK's National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs, Dairy Farmers of Britain and the National Farmers Union before migrating to Tasmania in 2006.

Phillip now works as a facilitator and sessional teacher with dairy apprentices and high-risk licence trainees who need language, literacy and numeracy support.

Phillip is keenly interested in ensuring genuine community engagement and fairness in the education sector—especially through authentic and properly resourced parent engagement initiatives, widely recognised as essential to improve educational outcomes for all students, particularly in the vital early years of schooling.

Phillip joined the Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations (TASSO) management committee in 2013. He also sits on the Asia Education Foundation Advisory Board, Safe Schools Coalition National Steering Committee and the University of Tasmania's Initial Teacher Education Course Advisory Committee.

Phillip was elected President of ACSSO in September 2015.

Dianne Giblin AM B.Ed

Australian Council of State School Organisations

Chief Executive Officer

Family Engagement Consultant

Launch – Family Engagement Circle

Di has worked in education in both paid and unpaid capacity for the past 32 years

Di has a passion for education, public education, and the opportunities it affords young people. She has led the ACSSO secretariat since 2011 but has been a significant player in parent activism since 1984 when her eldest child commenced school. She is proud of her four children's achievements – all successes of public education.

She has held various volunteer roles in the parent movement finishing her P&C career as President of the Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of NSW.

Di was a founding Director of Public Education Foundation whose board position she held for six years; a founding Director of Primary Ethics Board and also a founding Director of The Parenthood board.

She worked in a paid capacity for the NSW education department in a number of roles across a large area of Sydney. Her roles were all in the area of parent engagement and home-school partnerships including school based community officer, across district Community Development Officer and regional Partnership Officer – all through the Priority Schools Program.

Recognition of her work saw her commended for Meritorious Service to Public Education and Training in 2010. In 2012 Dianne was admitted as a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia for her service to public education and the community

Di's greatest love is her family but coming a close second is her love of music. Whilst an amateur guitar player she likes to spend downtime with it, her grandchildren and her playing her vinyl albums on the new turntable.



Donna Sirmais

Australian Council of State School Organisations

Family Engagement Practitioner, Consultant,

Communications Officer and Teacher

Launch – Family Engagement Circle

Donna is an experienced family engagement practitioner and consultant with some 17 years' experience which commenced when her eldest of three children began Kindergarten. The positive family engagement practices she experienced at the school motivated Donna to be a passionate advocate for Family Engagement practices in schools and reshape her career path. She believes that the relationships which are built between schools and families not only impact the life course for students but can also change the path for families.

Donna has held various roles within school P&C associations including President, Vice President and committee member and built on family

engagement practices and effective communication strategies to assist learning outcomes for students and their families through working for the NSW Department of Education in schools as a Community Liaison Officer and Community Partnerships Officer and in a regional position as a Partnership Officer.

Donna has been a member of the ACSSO team since 2013, initially as a Project Officer for the Family School and Community Partnerships Bureau and now as the teams Communication Officer. Donna also holds a Masters of Teaching Primary Education.

Donna was recognised for her work in family and community engagement in schools, with a NSW Department of Education Certificate of Achievement award.

