



**WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY**

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER CONFERENCE 2025

Friday 23 May, Parramatta South Campus

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Real World Ready

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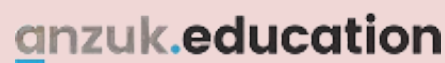
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**WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY**

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER CONFERENCE 2025



Friday 23 May



Parramatta South Campus

Real World Ready

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NESA

Diocese of Parramatta

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Georges River Council

Workshop Timetable

Session 1 Workshops | 11:10am – 12:00pm

Workshop Title	EC	Pri	Sec	Presenter	Room
The Accreditation Journey & Transforming lives through learning in NSW Public Education	x	x	x	Beverly Desgrand (NESA) & Deb Summerhayes (NSW Department of Education)	EE Auditorium
Explicit Teaching Pedagogical Framework	-	x	-	Katrina Berwick	EE Wing 1
Empowering Classrooms with the United Nations SDGs - From Ideas to Impact		x	x	Shaista Khan – NSW UNAA Schools Program	Pavilion 1
Understanding EAL/D Education		x	x	Kerrie Quee - WSU	Pavilion 2
Embedding Aboriginal Perspectives: How to implement 8 ways of learning.	x			Metta Ly - Fairfield City Council	EB.3.33A
Classroom Management			x	Trevor Rothery – Cambridge Park HS	EA.2.30
Navigating the State Library as a teacher	x	x	x	Jessica Knight – NSW State Library	EB.G.02
Language for Belonging	x			Sarah Herbet & Victoria Kirkwood - IGS	EA.G.19
Heroes for Habitat	x	x		Jessica Menendez – Sydney Zoo	Outside
Inclusive Education in Secondary			x	Brittany Pearce – Jamison HS	EA.G.33
K-6 Student Wellbeing		x		Melissa Jacka – St Mary’s Senior HS	EA.G.27
Using Data to Improve Teaching and Learning		x	x	Sue Frost – Chester Hill HS	EB.G.21
Understanding the diverse needs of today’s classroom		x		Nerida Rylewski – Ropes Crossing PS	EA.2.22

Session 2 Workshops | 12:10pm – 1:00pm

Workshop Title	EC	Pri	Sec	Presenter	Room
Schools full of cyborgs: AI has arrived in education	x	x	x	Matt Esterman – The Next Word	EE Auditorium
Unleashing Exploration with Early STEM experiences – Little Scientists	x			Ana-Luisa Franco – Little Scientists	EE Wing 1
Inclusive Classrooms and Teaching Strategies		x	x	Tracey O’Connor -ASPECT	Pavilion 1
Educators: The Guardians of Society		x	x	Foty Loupos – Lithgow HS	Pavilion 2
Stand Out in Your Job Applications: Get Creative with Adobe Express	x	x	x	Kaytlin Hartley - Adobe	EB.3.33A
The Power of Collaboration		x	x	Katinka Kastner – NSW Teachers Federation	EA.G.19
Differentiation in the classroom & individualised learning plans		x	x	Fabiola Vattuone – Liverpool West PS	EB.3.06
What makes dinosaurs so fascinating to children?	x			Richa Basnet - Young Academics	EB.G.02
Animal Enrichment – Biological Diversity			x	Jessica Menendez -Sydney Zoo	EA.1.28
Empowering Tomorrow’s Educators: Opportunities in the Independent Sector		x	x	Tiffany Roos -AIS NSW	EB.G.38
A starting how to – what you need to know		x		Nerida Rylewski - Ropes Crossing	EA.2.22
Knowing Your Rights: Working in ECEC	x			Peter Criticos - IEU	EA.G.33

Digital games and learning		x	x	Shea Rigney - WSU	EA.2.30
From Placement to Employment		x	x	Alison Laird – Epping Boys High School	EA.2.21
Student Wellbeing			x	Melissa Jacka - St Mary's Senior School	EA.G.27
Building your teacher identity in the first 100 days		x		Michael Wong-See	EB.3.36

Session 3 Workshops 1:45pm – 2:15pm					
Workshop Title	EC	Pri	Sec	Presenter	Room
Your ideas, your world: children’s voices at the heart of our learning	x			Stephanie Vidaic - Explore & Develop	EE Wing 1
Positive Psychology to Avoid Burn Out		x	x	Kath Lathouras – Emmaus Catholic College	Pavilion 1
Working in a Public Preschool Attached to a School	x			Lauren Halloran – Bankstown South Infants	Pavilion 2
Sydney Zoo -Bungarribee Wildlife Workshop – Caring for Country	x	x	x	Cindy Laws – Sydney Zoo	EA.G.18
Hands that speak; Learning Auslan with 2-3 year olds	x			Linh - Explore & Develop Annandale	EA.G.32
From Application to Appointment		x	x	Dr Chris Grima -Farell, Shannon Brehony, Siobhan Rossenrode – Teach NSW	EA.G.19
The best teachers think as a student		x	x	Phil Devitt - WSU	EA.G.33
Variable testing - the heart of the scientific method		x	x	Ben Newsome – Fizzics Education	EA.G.36
Working in the Catholic Sector	x	x	x	Stephanie Chidiac, Jan Statton, Gerard Moore	EA.1.23
Formative Assessment of Reading for Stage 4 students – NSW Department of Education			x	Shelley Rosen	EA.1.27
Being teacher ready from a school perspective –			x	Herbert Wong - Northern Beaches Secondary College	EA.1.28
Trauma informed practices – NSW Department of Education	x	x	x	Jacquelyn Holmes & James Wade – Curran PS	EB.G.02
Rights, Responsibilities and Professional Support; Empowering your teaching career;		x	x	Peter Criticos - IEU	EB.3.22
Future ready learners in a diverse world – Ethical and Cultural Literacy in an AI world.		x	x	Anisha Lakhani	EB.3.33A
Building Resilience and Sustainability to Thrive in Complex Schools		x	x	Mt Druitt Network Principals	EB.3.17

Early Childhood Workshops

Primary Workshops

Secondary Workshops

Early Childhood	
Title	Journey to Accreditation & Transforming lives through learning in NSW Public Education
Location & Session	EE Auditorium, Session 1
Presenter	Beverley Desgrand NESA Deb Summerhayes
Organisation	NESA & NSW Department of Education
Presentation Summary	Part 1 – Journey to accreditation NESA Part 2- Join Deb Summerhayes as she shares valuable advice and reflects on her journey in public education, highlighting her influence on learners and inspiring future teachers in NSW public schools.
Bio	

Early Childhood	
Title	How to implement 8 ways of learning
Location & Session	EA.G.19, Session 1
Presenter	Metta Ly from Tasman Parade ELC
Organisation	Fairfield City Council
Presentation Summary	Discover how to become a leader in Early STEM education while embedding Aboriginal perspectives and building meaningful community connections. This session will explore practical strategies for implementing the 8 Ways of Learning framework and developing culturally responsive programming in early childhood settings. Delivered by Fairfield City Council's Best Start Education & Care, this workshop is ideal for future educators seeking to make a real impact through inclusive, community-connected teaching practices.
Bio	Metta and Kaye are early childhood educators at Tasman Parade Early Learning Centre (Fairfield City Council). Together, they develop and deliver curriculum-aligned programs that embed the 8 Ways of Learning framework,

	Aboriginal perspectives, and community connections. They also support professional learning for educators across the Best Start Education & Care network, ensuring inclusive, STEM-focused experiences that help every child reach their highest potential.
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Early Childhood	
Title	Navigating the State Library as a Teacher
Location & Session	EB.G.02, Session 1
Presenter	Jessica Knight
Organisation	State Library of New South Wales
Presentation Summary	Discover how the State Library of New South Wales can support you throughout your teaching career. In this interactive session, pre-service teachers will explore the library's diverse digital and physical collections, learn how to access curriculum-aligned teaching and learning activities, and engage with on-site and virtual excursion opportunities for both primary and secondary classrooms. Participants will also be guided through the library's website to access free, high-quality educational resources and professional learning offerings designed to enrich classroom practice.
Bio	Jessica Knight represents the State Library of New South Wales, one of Australia's oldest and most significant cultural institutions. Actively collecting since 1826, the library holds an extensive archive of resources that preserve and present the historical, cultural, and scientific heritage of New South Wales and Australia. Jessica is passionate about helping educators harness the library's rich collections- both digital and onsite- to create engaging learning experiences. Through her work, she supports the development of teacher capacity and promotes meaningful partnerships between the library and the broader education community.

Early Childhood	
Title	Language for Belonging
Location & Session	EB.G.21, Session 1
Presenter	Sarah Herbert & Victoria Kirkwood
Organisation	International Grammar School Early Learning Centre

Presentation Summary	This session traces the development of the “Language for Belonging” project at International Grammar School Early Learning Centre, where educators and children partnered with local Indigenous community members to research and assign authentic totem names to each class. You’ll explore how cultural competence, the 8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning, inquiry and reflection, and inclusive practice were woven into curriculum design- through storytelling, artmaking, and community consultation- despite the challenges posed by COVID-19. Walk away with practical strategies to embed Indigenous perspectives in early learning, foster children’s sense of identity and place, and build respectful, ongoing connections with First Nations knowledge holders.
Bio	<p>Sarah Herbert: Head of Children’s Programs at International Grammar School Early Learning Centre, Sarah led the “Language for Belonging” project—guiding educators and children in co-researching and embedding Indigenous totem names through storytelling, art, and community partnerships. She specialises in building cultural competence and authentic Indigenous perspectives in early years curricula.</p> <p>Victoria Kirkwood: Director of Early Learning at IGS, Victoria co-facilitates the “Language for Belonging” initiative, forging strong links with Indigenous knowledge holders and families. With expertise in values-driven, bilingual education, she ensures sustainable, place-based learning that deepens children’s connection to language, culture, and community.</p>

Early Childhood	
Title	Heroes for Habitat
Location & Session	Outside, Session 1
Presenter	Jess Menendez
Organisation	Sydney Zoo
Presentation Summary	Learn about habitats, wildlife and how to protect the environment.
Bio	Jess Menendez is the Education Officer at Sydney Zoo, developing and managing curriculum-aligned teacher programs, excursions, and resources that connect native

	wildlife and Indigenous ecological knowledge to classroom learning.
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Early Childhood	
Title	Schools full of cyborgs: AI has arrived in education
Location & Session	EE Auditorium, Session 2
Presenter	Matt Esterman
Organisation	The Next Word
Presentation Summary	Explore the rapid integration of artificial intelligence in classrooms and what it means for teaching and learning. This session will unpack how AI-powered tools—ranging from adaptive tutoring systems to generative content assistants—are reshaping educator roles, student engagement, and assessment practices. You’ll gain practical insights into selecting and implementing AI solutions responsibly, addressing ethical considerations, and preparing for a future where human and machine collaboration is integral to education.
Bio	<p>Matthew Esterman has worked in education for over 15 years, having experience as a teacher, school leader, presenter, writer, and consultant.</p> <p>He holds postgraduate degrees from Macquarie University and the University of Sydney, and is the recipient of several awards, including the Commonwealth Bank Teaching Fellowship for 2023 supported by Australian Schools Plus.</p> <p>He has an interest in establishing and maintaining valuable partnerships with external organisations such as universities, industry partners and charitable organisations, as well as seeking out and adopting innovative approaches to the school experience.</p> <p>Matthew has explored many innovative areas of school and work, including eSports, entrepreneurship, partner projects, school design and professional learning.</p> <p>Matthew is a fresh thinker in the strategic and practical use of AI in schools, exploring the potential and pitfalls of various tools and platforms. He is a keen lifelong learner</p>

	who believes we can bend the future using creativity, critical thinking, and compassion.
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Early Childhood	
Title	Unleashing Exploration with Early STEM experiences
Location & Session	EE Wing 1, Session 2
Presenter	Ana-Luisa Franco
Organisation	Little Scientists
Presentation Summary	Engage in hands-on STEM activities designed for children aged 0–8 and discover how inquiry-based approaches can transform everyday moments into rich learning opportunities. This interactive workshop will cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The long-term benefits of STEM-rich early learning programs - Strategies for embedding STEM within daily curriculum routines - Techniques for identifying STEM learning moments using common materials - Pathways to ongoing support through Little Scientists' professional development offerings
Bio	Ana-Luisa Franco is a STEM professional development leader at Little Scientists, a not-for-profit organisation delivering inquiry-based training for early childhood educators. She coordinates in-person and online workshops on pedagogy-driven STEM topics, supporting teachers to create engaging, confidence-building STEM experiences and access continuous learning opportunities from graduation onward.

Early Childhood	
Title	Get Creative with Adobe Express: Stand Out in Your Job Applications
Location & Session	EA.LG.18, Session 2
Presenter	Kaitlin Hartley
Organisation	Adobe
Presentation Summary	Learn how to leverage Adobe Express to craft visually compelling portfolios and application materials that highlight

	your skills as a pre-service teacher. This hands-on session will cover the fundamentals of Adobe Express—layout design, branding, and multimedia integration—so you can produce professional, eye-catching documents and digital portfolios. Whether you're new to design or familiar with Creative Cloud, you'll leave with practical techniques to elevate your job applications and make a memorable first impression.
Bio	Kaitlin Hartley is an Education Specialist at Adobe, working closely with universities through the Creative Campus program. She develops and delivers training on Adobe Express and other Creative Cloud tools, helping students and staff create high-quality digital content and portfolios that support academic and professional success.

Early Childhood	
Title	What makes dinosaurs so fascinating to children?
Location & Session	EB.G.02 Session 2
Presenter	Richa Basnet
Organisation	Young Academics Early Learning Centre
Presentation Summary	“What makes dinosaurs so fascinating to children?” This question became the heart of a learning experience sparked by the voices and play of children where meaningful learning always begins with the child. This presentation will explore how a child-led interest in dinosaurs evolved into a rich, multi-layered learning experience within a ECEC setting. Sparked by spontaneous imaginative play where children were observed roaring, stomping, and creating dinosaur habitats with natural materials, this experience showcases how educators can respond intentionally to children's passions to deepen learning. The presentation will detail how the educator used observation, reflection, and research to design a purposeful small world dinosaur setup, incorporating natural elements, figurines, and open-ended prompts. It will highlight how the children's engagement extended into early literacy, numeracy, science, and storytelling, all while promoting collaboration and critical thinking. This will show how curiosity can be used as a foundation for curriculum planning, and how educators can

	use inquiry-based learning to create meaningful connections.
Bio	Richa, Centre Manager at a Young Academics Early Learning Centre, has been with the organisation for over four years, beginning her journey as a casual educator before progressing through various roles to leadership. Her passion for early childhood education is grounded in a strong belief in the importance of the early years and in the power of child-led, play-based learning. As an Early Childhood Teacher, Richa brings both theoretical knowledge and practical experience to her work, creating inclusive, responsive environments where children's interests drive the learning. She views the environment as the "third teacher," intentionally curating spaces and experiences that reflect each child's curiosity, voice, and developmental needs. For Richa, every small-world setup, sensory invitation, or reading corner is more than an activity, it's a message to children that they are seen, heard, and valued. Her approach is deeply relational and purposeful, rooted in a belief that when educators truly listen and follow children's lead, powerful learning and meaningful connections naturally follow.

Early Childhood	
Title	Empowering Tomorrow's Educators: Opportunities in the Independent Sector
Location & Session	EB.G.38, Session 2
Presenter	Tiffany Roos
Organisation	The Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales
Presentation Summary	Explore the diverse career pathways and professional supports offered by independent schools. This session will cover what distinguishes the independent sector- its varied specialist programs, collaborative culture, and student-centred focus- and how these elements translate into tailored induction, mentorship, and ongoing professional development for early career teachers. Learn how choice, diversity, and autonomy in independent education can empower you to grow your practice and make a meaningful impact.

Bio	Tiffany Roos is a Policy and Member Services Advisor at the Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales. In her role, she supports schools and educators by coordinating professional learning initiatives, advocacy efforts, and resource programs designed to enhance teacher development and wellbeing within the independent sector.
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Early Childhood	
Title	Knowing Your Rights: Working in ECEC
Location & Session	EB.G.02, Session 2
Presenter	Peter Criticos
Organisation	Independent Education Union NSW/ACT
Presentation Summary	This workshop will provide pre-service teachers with essential knowledge about their professional rights and responsibilities, the importance of union membership, and practical tips for navigating the early stages of their teaching career. Attendees will gain insights into building a successful, sustainable, and fulfilling teaching journey.
Bio	Peter Criticos represents the Independent Education Union NSW/ACT, advocating for teachers and support staff in non-government schools on issues of fair pay, working conditions, and professional development opportunities. He works directly with members to provide guidance and support that helps educators thrive throughout their careers.

Early Childhood	
Title	Your ideas, your world: children's voices at the heart of our learning
Location & Session	EE Wing 1, Session 3
Presenter	Stephanie Vidaic
Organisation	Explore & Develop North Ryde Public School
Presentation Summary	One of the greatest wonders of teaching in early childhood is the endless possibilities in our practice. "All children engage in learning that promotes confident and creative individuals and successful lifelong learners." - EYLF. We believe that this statement applies not only to children but also to us as educators, inspiring and challenging each other to surpass perceived limits. How far can we go with our

	commitment to children’s rights and agency? Our project, 'Your Ideas, Your World: Children’s voices at the heart of our learning,' embodies this spirit by advocating for children's voices to be heard and respected. We believe the possibilities venture as far as the educators’ creativity and innovation. We envision a space where educators' creativity and innovation determine the limits of possibility. By cultivating an environment where children freely express themselves, we resist confining children’s voices within the boundaries of play and instead foster a community where learning is a shared journey and deeply embedded in everything we do. This extends far beyond children’s everyday opinions —it reshapes our approach to learning, child protection, and service policies and procedures, fostering a collaborative community where innovation thrives and every voice matters.
Bio	

Early Childhood	
Title	Working in a Public Preschool attached to a school
Location & Session	Pavilion 2, Session 3
Presenter	Lauren Halloran
Organisation	Bankstown South Infants School Preschool NSW Department of Education
Presentation Summary	This session offers insights into working in a public preschool setting attached to a primary school. With the NSW Department of Education planning the rollout of 100 new public preschools, this presentation will give pre-service teachers a first-hand perspective on what it’s like to work in a Department setting under the National Quality Standard and Department of Education guidelines.
Bio	Lauren Halloran is the Assistant Principal Preschool and a teacher at Bankstown South Infants School Preschool. She brings experience from a public preschool setting and offers valuable insights for early childhood teachers entering Department of Education roles.

Early Childhood	
Title	Bungaribee Wildlife Workshop

Location & Session	EA.G.18, Session 3
Presenter	Jessica Menendez
Organisation	Sydney Zoo
Presentation Summary	Dive into Australia’s unique wildlife through the eyes of First Nations peoples. In this interactive session, students will meet a variety of native animals and discover traditional ecological knowledge that informs respectful care for Country. Through hands-on experiences and storytelling, participants will learn how Indigenous perspectives shape conservation practices and foster a deeper connection to the natural world.
Bio	Jess Menendez is the Education Officer at Sydney Zoo, developing and managing curriculum-aligned teacher programs, excursions, and resources that connect native wildlife and Indigenous ecological knowledge to classroom learning.

Early Childhood	
Title	Hands that speak; Learning Auslan with 2-3 year olds
Location & Session	EA.G.32, Session 3
Presenter	Annandale
Organisation	Explore & Develop
Presentation Summary	Our endless exploration into the land of the unspoken evolved with the question, “Can we gesture a language?.” Teacher-research, influenced by the principles from Reggio Emilia and place-based pedagogies, underpinned a responsive curriculum design from which emerged a fruitful garden of poems, rhymes and tales that bridge the tangible and the intangible. It opened a platform on which adults and children co-construct their visualisation and perception of the world through a multitude of ‘languages.’ This research is rooted in the belief that our youngest children are the experts at employing metaphoric gestures in their play. Embedding sign language as an intentional teaching practice embraces this very nature in young children’s ways of learning and socialising. This teacher-thinking dialogued with the children’s interests to create a rich curriculum that simultaneously explored the life of seeds, connection to place, and learning Auslan together. We soon learned from research and reality that when gestures and words are

	combined, visual and kinaesthetic learners are able to connect the verbal explanation to the visual presentation, which improves their comprehension and retention through the process of dual coding. Through Auslan, our children continued to ferment the fantasy of their surroundings through art making, music, digital play, construction, and photography. A concrete example of this multimodal communication is the birth of our Auslan Book, a valuable resource to celebrate our children's citizenship as they become the custodians of their knowledge and able to pass their Auslan skills to families and the wider community.
Bio	Linh is an early childhood teacher at Explore & Develop Annandale. She has a dynamic approach to education and loves being out the gate with her children. Her recent interest in sign language has led to the Auslan project and the exploration of young children's citizenship in our community.

Early Childhood	
Title	Working in the Catholic Sector
Location & Session	EA.1.21, Session 3
Presenter	Stephanie Chidiac, Jan Statton, Gerard Moore
Organisation	Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese
Presentation Summary	Discover what it's like to work in Catholic education. This session will introduce pre-service teachers to a system of schools committed to a consistent and future-focused learning approach—developing students' communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking skills. Learn about the mission and values that underpin Catholic education, as well as scholarship options, employment pathways, and professional development opportunities for early career teachers.
Bio	Stephanie Chidiac, Jan Statton, and Gerard Moore represent Catholic education and bring a wealth of experience supporting new educators. They will share practical insights into teaching in Catholic schools, the support available to early career teachers, and how the system nurtures both student growth and teacher development.

Early Childhood	
Title	Trauma Informed Classroom Practices
Location & Session	EB.G.02, Session 3
Presenter	Jacquelyn Holmes & James Wade
Organisation	NSW Department of Education – Curran Public School
Presentation Summary	This presentation provides an overview of trauma, how students who experience trauma can be affected, and how their behaviours may impact the safety and learning of others. It also explores practical classroom strategies, centred around the three pillars of trauma-informed practice, to help create environments that support all students- including those with trauma.
Bio	<p>Jacquelyn has over a decade of experience in teaching in early childhood intervention settings and primary schools K-6 in both the mainstream and support unit classes. She has been an assistant principal across multiple schools and is currently in the role of Assistant Principal Mentor at Curran Public School, an offclass role, dedicated to mentoring and coaching early career teachers. Jacquelyn has led the implementation of wellbeing practices in complex school settings, providing professional learning on trauma informed practices and developing school systems for inclusive and trauma informed practices to engage all students and proactively support behaviour.</p> <p>James Wade: James has done extensive work at Curran Public School to create a culturally safe learning environment for all students through his expertise in wellbeing practices. He has worked to embed Zones of Regulation and Berry Street Education Model practices and has shared incredible success with students through his Engagement Group initiative. James is currently leading a project to weave learning dispositions and Aboriginal 8 Ways Pedagogy into teaching and learning programs school wide. James is employed as an Assistant Principal Engagement & Wellbeing and has been instrumental in driving a cultural shift at Curran Public School towards more inclusive and trauma informed practices.</p>

Title	Journey to Accreditation & Transforming lives through learning in NSW Public Education
Location & Session	EE Auditorium, Session 1
Presenter	Beverley Desgrand NESA Deb Summerhayes
Organisation	NESA & NSW Department of Education
Presentation Summary	Part 1 – Journey to accreditation NESA Part 2- Join Deb Summerhayes (Executive Director, NSW Department of Education) as she shares valuable advice and reflects on her journey in public education, highlighting her influence on learners and inspiring future teachers in NSW public schools.
Bio	

Primary	
Title	Explicit Teaching Pedagogical Framework
Location & Session	EE Wing 1, Session 1
Presenter	Katrina Berwick
Organisation	Cambridge Park Public School
Presentation Summary	This session will explore the P–6 pedagogical framework used at Cambridge Park Public School, grounded in current research on Explicit Teaching. Learn how evidence-based practices, personalised learning, wellbeing strategies, and collaborative approaches are implemented to support student engagement and achievement across a diverse school setting.
Bio	Katrina Berwick is a teacher at Cambridge Park Public School. She brings practical experience in implementing Explicit Teaching strategies as part of a whole-school, research-informed framework.

Primary	
Title	From ideas to impact: Empowering classrooms with the United Nations SDGs
Location & Session	Pavilion 1, Session 1
Presenter	Shaista Khan
Organisation	United Nations Association Australia (NSW Division)

Presentation Summary	This session introduces the United Nations Association of Australia (NSW) School Program and outlines how pre-service teachers can become Teacher Ambassadors. Learn about the UN's role in global education, the urgency of advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and explore practical strategies to embed SDGs into the classroom curriculum.
Bio	Shaista Khan is the Director of the UNAA NSW School Program, which is part of the broader World Federation of United Nations Associations. She leads a team of educators and professionals- including Dr. Cheryle Yin Lo, Laura Curran, and Anisha Lakhani- who are passionate about supporting teachers to promote global citizenship and sustainability through education.

Primary	
Title	Understanding EAL/D Education
Location & Session	Pavilion 2, Session 1
Presenter	Kerrie Quee
Organisation	NSW Department of Education
Presentation Summary	This workshop introduces the fundamentals of English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) education. Participants will explore how to create inclusive learning environments that support cultural and linguistic diversity, and learn strategies for differentiating instruction to help EAL/D students develop the English language skills they need to access the curriculum and succeed in school.
Bio	With 40 years of experience as a primary teacher, Kerrie currently works three days a week as the EAL/D Education Leader for the NSW Department of Education in the Regional South Directorate. She is a Nationally Accredited Highly Accomplished teacher and serves as a NESA assessor for HALT accreditation. She is also a casual academic at Western Sydney University, where she teaches in the Master of Teaching program and acts as a senior advisor for professional experience. She is responsible for assessing final-year students' Teaching Performance Assessments (TPA).

Primary	
Title	Navigating the State Library as a Teacher
Location & Session	EB.G.02, Session 1
Presenter	Jessica Knight
Organisation	State Library of New South Wales
Presentation Summary	Discover how the State Library of New South Wales can support you throughout your teaching career. In this interactive session, pre-service teachers will explore the library's diverse digital and physical collections, learn how to access curriculum-aligned teaching and learning activities, and engage with on-site and virtual excursion opportunities for both primary and secondary classrooms. Participants will also be guided through the library's website to access free, high-quality educational resources and professional learning offerings designed to enrich classroom practice.
Bio	Jessica Knight represents the State Library of New South Wales, one of Australia's oldest and most significant cultural institutions. Actively collecting since 1826, the library holds an extensive archive of resources that preserve and present the historical, cultural, and scientific heritage of New South Wales and Australia. Jessica is passionate about helping educators harness the library's rich collections- both digital and onsite- to create engaging learning experiences. Through her work, she supports the development of teacher capacity and promotes meaningful partnerships between the library and the broader education community.

Primary	
Title	Heroes for Habitat
Location & Session	Outside, Session 1
Presenter	Jess Menendez
Organisation	Sydney Zoo
Presentation Summary	Learn about wildlife, habitats and protecting the environment.
Bio	Jess Menendez is the Education Officer at Sydney Zoo, developing and managing curriculum-aligned teacher programs, excursions, and resources that connect native wildlife and Indigenous ecological knowledge to classroom learning.

Primary	
Title	Primary Wellbeing
Location & Session	EA.G.33, Session 2
Presenter	Melissa Jacka
Organisation	St Mary's Senior High School
Presentation Summary	Students of all ages respond to people they can connect with. Every student is unique. As a teacher, you will be faced with a diverse range of students every day. It is human nature to respond to those around us with whom we have a connection. There is probably a teacher in your education journey who you remember because they influenced your own school experience. In this workshop we will explore the Wellbeing domains and how we can make connections with our students, using real world experiences, to help them to be their personal best.
Bio	Mel is a Western Sydney University alumnus who has worked for the NSW Department of Education for over 30 years. Trained as a secondary teacher, she has worked across a range of school settings, as Senior Education Officer, for NESA in a variety of roles and lectured. She has been called upon to develop resources for teachers, facilitate workshops and support new and experienced teachers to implement curriculum. In addition to teaching a range of subjects Mel's career has consistently involved a role in Student Wellbeing and her philosophy for working in education is "Every teacher is a teacher of Wellbeing".

Primary	
Title	Using Data to Improve Teaching and Learning
Location & Session	EB.G.21, Session 2
Presenter	Sue Frost
Organisation	Chester Hill High School
Presentation Summary	Learn about different types of data and how these work together to provide a complete valid, reliable and fair picture of a student's abilities.
Bio	Sue is currently the Deputy Principal at Chester Hill High School, bringing 23 years of experience in education. Throughout her career, she has taught a wide range of

	<p>subjects and held several leadership roles, including Deputy Principal at Macarthur Girls High School, Head Teacher Professional Practice at Doonside Technology High School, and Head Teacher HSIE at both Doonside Technology and Kingswood High Schools.</p> <p>Sue is passionate about creating real-world learning opportunities that broaden students' horizons and support practical, hands-on learning. She is also dedicated to empowering early career teachers to build confidence, competence, and a deep, lasting connection to the teaching profession.</p>
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Primary	
Title	Understanding the Diverse needs of today's Classroom
Location & Session	EA.2.22, Session 2
Presenter	Nerida Rylewski
Organisation	Department of Education
Presentation Summary	This workshop will support pre-service teachers in understanding and addressing the diverse learning needs in today's mainstream K-6 classrooms. The session will provide an overview of various student learning needs, with practical suggestions for resources to further support teachers in accommodating these needs.
Bio	Nerida Rylewski is a teacher at Ropes Crossing Public School, within the Department of Education. She has extensive experience working with diverse learners and is passionate about helping pre-service teachers build the skills necessary to support all students effectively in the classroom.

Primary	
Title	Schools full of cyborgs: AI has arrived in education
Location & Session	EE Auditorium, Session 2
Presenter	Matt Esterman
Organisation	The Next Word
Presentation Summary	Step into the future of education – because it's already here. In this provocative keynote, Matt Esterman unpacks how AI is reshaping what it means to teach and learn, from lesson planning in seconds to students outsourcing thinking to

	<p>chatbots. Are we empowering creativity or eroding curiosity? You'll hear real stories from the classroom, grapple with tough questions, and leave with a fresh lens on your future as a teacher in the age of intelligent machines.</p>
Bio	

Primary	
Title	Inclusive Classroom and Teaching Strategies
Location & Session	Pavilion 1, Session 2
Presenter	Tracey O'Connor
Organisation	ASPECT
Presentation Summary	In this session, we will focus on the importance of truly understanding each student to create an inclusive and effective learning environment, also look at current diversity statistics. We will explore the need for personalised adjustments, emphasising how recognising students' unique strengths, challenges, and disabilities can inform teaching strategies. Additionally, we will discuss how to foster an environment where diverse needs are met, enabling all learners to thrive and have the best opportunity to reach their fullest potential.
Bio	

Primary	
Title	Educators: The Guardians of Society
Location & Session	Pavilion 2, Session 2
Presenter	Foty Loupos
Organisation	Lithgow Public School
Presentation Summary	What was it that called you to teaching? This workshop explores the importance of education- not only for individuals, but for communities, society, and even the ongoing evolution of our species. Participants will be invited to reflect on their purpose and step beyond their comfort zones as they delve into the politics, philosophy, and psychology of education from a practical, localised perspective. That perspective is you- because educators are the role models and guardians of our society.

Bio	Foty Loupos is the Principal at Lithgow High School, a comprehensive public school located at the gateway to the Central West in the heritage-listed Lithgow region. With approximately 750 students, the school community is diverse, including around 23% First Nations students and a growing EAL/D cohort. Lithgow High has a strong tradition of academic, sporting, and cultural engagement, grounded in its local community and environment.
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Primary	
Title	Get Creative with Adobe Express: Stand Out in Your Job Applications
Location & Session	EA.LG.18, Session 2
Presenter	Kaitlin Hartley
Organisation	Adobe
Presentation Summary	Learn how to leverage Adobe Express to craft visually compelling portfolios and application materials that highlight your skills as a pre-service teacher. This hands-on session will cover the fundamentals of Adobe Express—layout design, branding, and multimedia integration—so you can produce professional, eye-catching documents and digital portfolios. Whether you're new to design or familiar with Creative Cloud, you'll leave with practical techniques to elevate your job applications and make a memorable first impression.
Bio	Kaitlin Hartley is an Education Specialist at Adobe, working closely with universities through the Creative Campus program. She develops and delivers training on Adobe Express and other Creative Cloud tools, helping students and staff create high-quality digital content and portfolios that support academic and professional success.

Primary	
Title	The Power of Collaboration
Location & Session	EA.G.19, Session 2
Presenter	Katinka Kastner
Organisation	NSW Teachers Federation
Presentation Summary	This session will guide early career teachers through the transition from study to professional practice, providing

	essential information on gaining employment, accreditation, and accessing support. Learn how collaboration- with mentors, leaders, and your union- can empower you to deliver great outcomes and shape the future of public education.
Bio	Katinka Kastner represents the NSW Teachers Federation, the state's only registered union for public school teachers. She supports early career teachers as they enter the profession, advocating for their rights, development, and wellbeing.

Primary	
Title	Differentiation in the classroom & individualised learning plans
Location & Session	EA.2.27, Session 2
Presenter	Fabiola Vattuone
Organisation	Department of Education
Presentation Summary	This session explores what differentiation looks like in real classrooms and how to implement Individualised Learning Plans (ILPs) effectively. Learn practical strategies, discover useful resources, and understand how to meet the diverse needs of all learners.
Bio	Fabiola Vattuone is an educator with the NSW Department of Education, experienced in supporting inclusive practices through differentiation and the use of ILPs. She brings a practical approach to adapting teaching for a wide range of learning needs.

Primary	
Title	Empowering Tomorrow's Educators: Opportunities in the Independent Sector
Location & Session	EB.G.38, Session 2
Presenter	Tiffany Roos
Organisation	The Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales
Presentation Summary	Explore the diverse career pathways and professional supports offered by independent schools. This session will cover what distinguishes the independent sector- its varied specialist programs, collaborative culture, and student-centered focus- and how these elements translate into

	tailored induction, mentorship, and ongoing professional development for early career teachers. Learn how choice, diversity, and autonomy in independent education can empower you to grow your practice and make a meaningful impact.
Bio	Tiffany Roos is a Policy and Member Services Advisor at the Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales. In her role, she supports schools and educators by coordinating professional learning initiatives, advocacy efforts, and resource programs designed to enhance teacher development and wellbeing within the independent sector.

Primary	
Title	Digital games and learning
Location & Session	EA.2.30, Session 2
Presenter	Shea Rigney
Organisation	Western Sydney University
Presentation Summary	Digital literacy is identified as a general capability for application across all curriculums, including NSW syllabuses. Within this space are digital games, yet knowledge regarding their use and benefits are not often taught in initial teacher education. This session will explore the reasons why digital games are an important tool due to their alignment with key learning theories, their ability to improve engagement and motivation, and identifies the digital games available for use in classrooms. The use of digital games in teaching and learning also enables the use and development of 21st century skills in our students.
Bio	Shea has been a teacher in the education department for the past 12 years working in Western Sydney high schools. She has also worked in the university sector with pre-service teachers and is undertaking research in the education gaming space. Her current research explores how digital games can enhance history teaching, and how the use of digital games aligns to government policy.

Primary	
Title	From Placement to Employment

Location & Session	EA.2.21, Session 2
Presenter	Alison Laird
Organisation	Department of Education
Presentation Summary	This session will guide pre-service teachers on how to make the most of their placement experience and transition smoothly into employment. Learn the key steps to take before, during, and after your placement to leave a lasting, positive impression and become workplace ready. Ideal for those looking to understand school expectations and how to stand out in a Department of Education context.
Bio	Alison Laird is the practicum coordinator at Epping Boys High School and has supported numerous pre-service teachers over the past three years. She brings practical insights into what schools look for in future teachers and is a regular presenter at professional education events.

Primary	
Title	Building your teacher identity in the first 100 days.
Location & Session	EB.3.36, Session 2
Presenter	Michael Wong-See
Organisation	Department of Education
Presentation Summary	This session supports new teachers in navigating the shift from student or pre-service teacher to professional educator. Drawing on feedback from experienced mentor teachers, it explores the development of a teacher identity-how to present yourself, establish authority, and build a reputation that extends beyond the classroom.
Bio	Michael Wong-See is an experienced educator from Wentworthville Public School, which has a long-standing partnership with WSU and the Professional Experience team. His work focuses on supporting early career teachers as they step into their professional roles.

Primary	
Title	Positive Psychology to Avoid Burn Out
Location & Session	Pavilion 1, Session 3
Presenter	Kath Lathouras
Organisation	Emmaus Catholic College
Presentation Summary	
Bio	Head teacher English, Emmaus Catholic College

Primary	
Title	Bungaribee Wildlife Workshop
Location & Session	EA.G.18, Session 3
Presenter	Jessica Menedez
Organisation	Sydney Zoo
Presentation Summary	Dive into Australia's unique wildlife through the eyes of First Nations peoples. In this interactive session, students will meet a variety of native animals and discover traditional ecological knowledge that informs respectful care for Country. Through hands-on experiences and storytelling, participants will learn how Indigenous perspectives shape conservation practices and foster a deeper connection to the natural world.
Bio	Jess Menendez is the Education Officer at Sydney Zoo, developing and managing curriculum-aligned teacher programs, excursions, and resources that connect native wildlife and Indigenous ecological knowledge to classroom learning.

Primary	
Title	From Application to Appointment
Location & Session	EA.G.19, Session 3
Presenter	Dr Chris Grima-Farell
Organisation	TeachNSW
Presentation Summary	From Application to Appointment: Tips for Navigating Teaching Positions. Penultimate and final year students, join the Teach NSW team for advice on completing your approval to teach application, gaining casual, temporary or

	permanent employment and accelerating your teaching career in Australia's largest education system.
Bio	

Primary	
Title	The Best Teachers Think as a Student
Location & Session	EA.G.33, Session 3
Presenter	Phil Devitt
Organisation	Authentic student/learner-centred planning and pedagogy.
Presentation Summary	Establishing classroom teaching programmes that are planned with the student/learner as the centre of the learning experience.
Bio	

Primary	
Title	Variable Testing – The Heart of the Scientific Method
Location & Session	EA.G.36, Session 3
Presenter	Ben Newsome
Organisation	Fizzics Education
Presentation Summary	Learn classroom-tested ways to engage students in science whilst using simple materials. From kitchen chemistry to simple sound demonstrations, there are many ways students can test variables without breaking the bank.
Bio	Ben Newsome CF founded Fizzics Education in 2004 to deliver science education across Australia, having now reached over 4 million students. He is also a co-founder of Virtual Excursions Australia and the AVA Challenge. He is a qualified science teacher, 2013 Churchill Fellow, 2020 AMP Tomorrow Maker, thrice Australian Small Business Winner in Children's Education Services, and 2020 WSABE Outstanding Business Leader of the Year. He received the 2023 UTS Chancellor's Award for Excellence and the Faculty Award for Science. He's a board member of Educating for Leadership, past president of the ISTE Interactive Video Conferencing PLN, an ambassador for the NSW Association of Science Education Technicians, in the Hall of Fame for the Center for Interactive Learning & Collaboration, author of 'Be Amazing!', and the host of the FizzicsEd Podcast.

Primary	
Title	Working in the Catholic Sector
Location & Session	EA.1.23, Session 3
Presenter	Stephanie Chidiac, Jan Statton, Gerard Moore
Organisation	Catholic Schools & Broken Bay Institute
Presentation Summary	Discover what it's like to work in Catholic education. This session will introduce pre-service teachers to a system of schools committed to a consistent and future-focused learning approach—developing students' communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking skills. Learn about the mission and values that underpin Catholic education, as well as scholarship options, employment pathways, and professional development opportunities for early career teachers.
Bio	Stephanie Chidiac, Jan Statton, and Professor Gerard Moore represent Catholic education and bring a wealth of experience supporting new educators. They will share practical insights into teaching in Catholic schools, the support available to early career teachers, and how the system nurtures both student growth and teacher development.

Primary	
Title	Trauma Informed Classroom Practices
Location & Session	EB.G.02, Session 3
Presenter	Jacquelyn Holmes
Organisation	NSW Department of Education – Curran Public School
Presentation Summary	This presentation provides an overview of trauma, how students who experience trauma can be affected, and how their behaviours may impact the safety and learning of others. It also explores practical classroom strategies, centred around the three pillars of trauma-informed practice, to help create environments that support all students- including those with trauma.
Bio	Jacquelyn Holmes is an Assistant Principal at Curran Public School, a NSW Department of Education school.

Primary	
Title	Empowering your teaching career; Rights, Responsibilities and Professional Support.
Location & Session	EB.3.22, Session 3
Presenter	Peter Criticos
Organisation	Independent Education Union NSW/ACT
Presentation Summary	This workshop will provide pre-service teachers with essential knowledge about their professional rights and responsibilities, the importance of union membership, and practical tips for navigating the early stages of their teaching career. Attendees will gain insights into building a successful, sustainable, and fulfilling teaching journey.
Bio	Peter Criticos represents the Independent Education Union NSW/ACT, advocating for teachers and support staff in non-government schools on issues of fair pay, working conditions, and professional development opportunities. He works directly with members to provide guidance and support that helps educators thrive throughout their careers.

Primary	
Title	Future ready learners in a diverse world – Ethical and Cultural Literacy in an AI world.
Location & Session	EB.3.33A, Session 3
Presenter	Anisha Lakhani
Organisation	Independent Educational Consultant
Presentation Summary	This workshop focuses on developing future-ready learners by fostering ethical, cultural, and religious literacy in increasingly diverse classrooms. Pre-service teachers will gain practical frameworks and strategies to create inclusive and respectful learning environments, tackle stereotypes and biases, and encourage dialogue on diverse perspectives.
Bio	Anisha Lakhani is an educational consultant with expertise in cultural, ethical, and religious literacy. She has published a paper in the <i>Journal of Values and Beliefs</i> and is passionate about preparing students to navigate a diverse, AI-driven world.

Primary	
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Title	Building Resilience and Sustainability to Thrive in Complex Schools
Location & Session	EB.3.17, Session 3
Presenter	Mt Druitt Network
Organisation	NSW Department of Education
Presentation Summary	Entering the teaching profession is both exciting and daunting, particularly in complex school environments. This workshop equips pre-service teachers with the tools, mindset, and practical strategies to navigate their first years with confidence and resilience. Through real teacher voices, participants will hear first-hand experiences of working in diverse schools, confronting common worries, and myth busting misconceptions. Discussions will explore the importance of an equity mindset and trauma informed approach, helping new teachers build strong, supportive relationships with students. Practical strategies for classroom presence and management will be shared, including how to gain and maintain control through the creation of safe, inclusive learning environments. Participants will leave this session with increased confidence, practical tools, and a clearer sense of what it takes to thrive in a complex school setting. Participants will be encouraged and supported to engage further with Mount Druitt Network schools post-conference, including opportunities for school visits to offer a deeper understanding of context and culture.
Bio	

Secondary	
Title	Journey to Accreditation & Transforming lives through learning in NSW Public Education
Location & Session	EE Auditorium, Session 1
Presenter	Beverley Desgrand NESAs Deb Summerhayes
Organisation	NESA & NSW Department of Education
Presentation Summary	Part 1 – Journey to accreditation NESAs Part 2- Join Deb Summerhayes as she shares valuable advice and reflects on her journey in public education, highlighting her influence on learners and inspiring future teachers in NSW public schools.

Bio	
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Secondary	
Title	From ideas to impact: Empowering classrooms with the United Nations SDGs
Location & Session	Pavilion 1, Session 1
Presenter	Shaista Khan
Organisation	United Nations Association Australia (NSW Division)
Presentation Summary	This session introduces the United Nations Association of Australia (NSW) School Program and outlines how pre-service teachers can become Teacher Ambassadors. Learn about the UN's role in global education, the urgency of advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and explore practical strategies to embed SDGs into the classroom curriculum.
Bio	Shaista Khan is the Director of the UNAA NSW School Program, which is part of the broader World Federation of United Nations Associations. She leads a team of educators and professionals- including Dr. Cheryle Yin Lo, Laura Curran, and Anisha Lakhani- who are passionate about supporting teachers to promote global citizenship and sustainability through education.

Secondary	
Title	Understanding EAL/D Education
Location & Session	Pavilion 2, Session 1
Presenter	Kerrie Quee
Organisation	NSW Department of Education
Presentation Summary	This workshop introduces the fundamentals of English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) education. Participants will explore how to create inclusive learning environments that support cultural and linguistic diversity, and learn strategies for differentiating instruction to help EAL/D students develop the English language skills they need to access the curriculum and succeed in school.
Bio	Kerrie is an educator with the NSW Department of Education, the largest public education provider in Australia. She supports initiatives that promote inclusive teaching practices and build teacher capacity in working with

	students from diverse language backgrounds, including those learning English as an additional language or dialect.
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Secondary	
Title	Classroom Management
Location & Session	EA.2.30, Session 1
Presenter	Trevor Rothery
Organisation	Cambridge Park High School
Presentation Summary	This presentation will explore different ways to set up and manage challenging behaviours in your class by establishing consistent routines and practices. These practices are targeted at reducing student behaviours and creating a safe learning environment that focuses on student learning.
Bio	Trevor Rothery is a Head Teacher at Cambridge Park High School who have been teaching for 7 years. His experience is in a low SES school in Western Sydney, working with students from diverse backgrounds and different learning needs. His role is currently the HT of professional practice and as part of this, he works alongside the Departments of Education and Western Sydney University through the HUB program to support Pre-service and beginning teachers.

Secondary	
Title	Navigating the State Library as a Teacher
Location & Session	EB.G.02, Session 1
Presenter	Jessica Knight
Organisation	State Library of New South Wales
Presentation Summary	Discover how the State Library of New South Wales can support you throughout your teaching career. In this interactive session, pre-service teachers will explore the library's diverse digital and physical collections, learn how to access curriculum-aligned teaching and learning activities, and engage with on-site and virtual excursion opportunities for both primary and secondary classrooms. Participants will also be guided through the library's website to access free, high-quality educational resources and professional learning offerings designed to enrich classroom practice.
Bio	Jessica Knight represents the State Library of New South Wales, one of Australia's oldest and most significant cultural

	institutions. Actively collecting since 1826, the library holds an extensive archive of resources that preserve and present the historical, cultural, and scientific heritage of New South Wales and Australia. Jessica is passionate about helping educators harness the library's rich collections- both digital and onsite- to create engaging learning experiences. Through her work, she supports the development of teacher capacity and promotes meaningful partnerships between the library and the broader education community.
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Secondary	
Title	Inclusive Education in Secondary
Location & Session	EA.G.27, Session 1
Presenter	Brittany Pearce
Organisation	Jamison High School
Presentation Summary	This session introduces Early Career Teachers to key concepts and practices in inclusive education within secondary schools. Participants will explore what an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is, when and how it should be used, and how to apply differentiation strategies across learning environments and the curriculum. The session will offer practical examples of adjustments to support a wide range of student needs.
Bio	Brittany Pearce is a Special and Inclusive Education teacher with the NSW Department of Education, working at Jamison High School. She supports students with diverse diagnoses, including Autism Spectrum Disorder, ADHD, mental health conditions, and behavioural challenges. Brittany teaches across Life Skills and mainstream programs, providing differentiated support for students with high needs as well as High Potential and Gifted Education (HPGE) students.

Secondary	
Title	Using Data to Improve Teaching and Learning
Location & Session	EB.G.21, Session 2
Presenter	Sue Frost
Organisation	Chester Hill High School

Presentation Summary	Learn about different types of data and how these work together to provide a complete valid, reliable and fair picture of a student's abilities.
Bio	<p>Sue is currently the Deputy Principal at Chester Hill High School, bringing 23 years of experience in education. Throughout her career, she has taught a wide range of subjects and held several leadership roles, including Deputy Principal at Macarthur Girls High School, Head Teacher Professional Practice at Doonside Technology High School, and Head Teacher HSIE at both Doonside Technology and Kingswood High Schools.</p> <p>Sue is passionate about creating real-world learning opportunities that broaden students' horizons and support practical, hands-on learning. She is also dedicated to empowering early career teachers to build confidence, competence, and a deep, lasting connection to the teaching profession.</p>

Secondary	
Title	Schools full of cyborgs: AI has arrived in education
Location & Session	EE Auditorium, Session 2
Presenter	Matt Esterman
Organisation	The Next Word
Presentation Summary	Explore the rapid integration of artificial intelligence in classrooms and what it means for teaching and learning. This session will unpack how AI-powered tools—ranging from adaptive tutoring systems to generative content assistants—are reshaping educator roles, student engagement, and assessment practices. You'll gain practical insights into selecting and implementing AI solutions responsibly, addressing ethical considerations, and preparing for a future where human and machine collaboration is integral to education.
Bio	<p>Matthew Esterman has worked in education for over 15 years, having experience as a teacher, school leader, presenter, writer, and consultant.</p> <p>He holds postgraduate degrees from Macquarie University and the University of Sydney, and is the recipient of several</p>

	<p>awards, including the Commonwealth Bank Teaching Fellowship for 2023 supported by Australian Schools Plus.</p> <p>He has an interest in establishing and maintaining valuable partnerships with external organisations such as universities, industry partners and charitable organisations, as well as seeking out and adopting innovative approaches to the school experience.</p>
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Secondary	
Title	Inclusive Classroom and Teaching Strategies
Location & Session	Pavilion 1, Session 2
Presenter	Tracey O'Connor
Organisation	ASPECT
Presentation Summary	In this session, we will focus on the importance of truly understanding each student to create an inclusive and effective learning environment, also look at current diversity statistics. We will explore the need for personalised adjustments, emphasising how recognising students' unique strengths, challenges, and disabilities can inform teaching strategies. Additionally, we will discuss how to foster an environment where diverse needs are met, enabling all learners to thrive and have the best opportunity to reach their fullest potential.
Bio	<p>Tracey has worked in education for seventeen years, starting as a teacher aide and progressing to classroom teacher. She is now the Teaching and Learning coordinator at Aspect Western Sydney School. Her current role involves whole school support and direction of all teaching and learning K-12 across 14 school sites. Her most recent project has been a whole school literacy focus and tier 3 interventions using evidence informed practices resulting in improved quality learning experiences for students.</p> <p>Michelle started in education 25 years ago, with over 15 years of experience in Special Education. During that time, she has held leadership positions across multiple areas such as mainstream, support classes, SSP's both in disability and</p>

	behavioural SSP's. She currently is the Deputy Principal of Aspect Western Sydney where they strive in the belief that every child can learn given the right supports.
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Secondary	
Title	Educators: The Guardians of Society
Location & Session	Pavilion 2, Session 2
Presenter	Foty Loupos
Organisation	Lithgow Public School
Presentation Summary	What was it that called you to teaching? This workshop explores the importance of education- not only for individuals, but for communities, society, and even the ongoing evolution of our species. Participants will be invited to reflect on their purpose and step beyond their comfort zones as they delve into the politics, philosophy, and psychology of education from a practical, localised perspective. That perspective is you- because educators are the role models and guardians of our society.
Bio	Foty is first and foremost a student; he has just completed his PhD in the Metaphysics of Leadership and is now preparing a study in neuro-feedback training for high school students. As a school principal he is innovative; always looking for new ways to interpret and enact policy through educational philosophy and psychology. He believes student engagement is the key and is busy building the school he always wanted to go to. His current passion is the implementation of AI into the classroom, and the ethics and implications of AI for the future, especially in consideration of synthetic biological intelligence and neuromorphic engineering.

Secondary	
Title	Get Creative with Adobe Express: Stand Out in Your Job Applications
Location & Session	EA.LG.18, Session 2
Presenter	Kaitlin Hartley
Organisation	Adobe
Presentation Summary	Learn how to leverage Adobe Express to craft visually compelling portfolios and application materials that highlight

	your skills as a pre-service teacher. This hands-on session will cover the fundamentals of Adobe Express—layout design, branding, and multimedia integration—so you can produce professional, eye-catching documents and digital portfolios. Whether you're new to design or familiar with Creative Cloud, you'll leave with practical techniques to elevate your job applications and make a memorable first impression.
Bio	Kaitlin Hartley is an Education Specialist at Adobe, working closely with universities through the Creative Campus program. She develops and delivers training on Adobe Express and other Creative Cloud tools, helping students and staff create high-quality digital content and portfolios that support academic and professional success.

Secondary	
Title	The Power of Collaboration
Location & Session	EA.G.19, Session 2
Presenter	Katinka Kastner
Organisation	NSW Teachers Federation
Presentation Summary	This session will guide early career teachers through the transition from study to professional practice, providing essential information on gaining employment, accreditation, and accessing support. Learn how collaboration- with mentors, leaders, and your union- can empower you to deliver great outcomes and shape the future of public education.
Bio	Katinka Kastner represents the NSW Teachers Federation, the state's only registered union for public school teachers. She supports early career teachers as they enter the profession, advocating for their rights, development, and wellbeing.

Secondary	
Title	Differentiation in the classroom & individualised learning plans
Location & Session	EA.2.27, Session 2
Presenter	Fabiola Vattuone
Organisation	Department of Education

Presentation Summary	This session explores what differentiation looks like in real classrooms and how to implement Individualised Learning Plans (ILPs) effectively. Learn practical strategies, discover useful resources, and understand how to meet the diverse needs of all learners.
Bio	Fabiola Vattuone is an educator with the NSW Department of Education, experienced in supporting inclusive practices through differentiation and the use of ILPs. She brings a practical approach to adapting teaching for a wide range of learning needs.

Secondary	
Title	Animal Enrichment – Biological Diversity
Location & Session	EA.1.28, Session 2
Presenter	Jessica Menendez
Organisation	Sydney Zoo
Presentation Summary	Biological Diversity – using enrichment at the zoo to target adaptations for survival
Bio	Jess Menendez is the Education Officer at Sydney Zoo, developing and managing curriculum-aligned teacher programs, excursions, and resources that connect native wildlife and Indigenous ecological knowledge to classroom learning.

Secondary	
Title	Empowering Tomorrow's Educators: Opportunities in the Independent Sector
Location & Session	EB.G.38, Session 2
Presenter	Tiffany Roos
Organisation	The Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales
Presentation Summary	Explore the diverse career pathways and professional supports offered by independent schools. This session will cover what distinguishes the independent sector- its varied specialist programs, collaborative culture, and student-centered focus- and how these elements translate into tailored induction, mentorship, and ongoing professional development for early career teachers. Learn how choice, diversity, and autonomy in independent education can

	empower you to grow your practice and make a meaningful impact.
Bio	Tiffany Roos is a Policy and Member Services Advisor at the Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales. In her role, she supports schools and educators by coordinating professional learning initiatives, advocacy efforts, and resource programs designed to enhance teacher development and wellbeing within the independent sector.

Secondary	
Title	Digital games and learning
Location & Session	EA.2.30, Session 2
Presenter	Shea Rigney
Organisation	Western Sydney University
Presentation Summary	Digital literacy is identified as a general capability for application across all curriculums, including NSW syllabuses. Within this space are digital games, yet knowledge regarding their use and benefits are not often taught in initial teacher education. This session will explore the reasons why digital games are an important tool due to their alignment with key learning theories, their ability to improve engagement and motivation, and identifies the digital games available for use in classrooms. The use of digital games in teaching and learning also enables the use and development of 21st century skills in our students.
Bio	Shea has been a teacher in the education department for the past 12 years working in Western Sydney high schools. She has also worked in the university sector with pre-service teachers and is undertaking research in the education gaming space. Her current research explores how digital games can enhance history teaching, and how the use of digital games aligns to government policy.

Secondary	
Title	From Placement to Employment
Location & Session	EA.2.21, Session 2
Presenter	Alison Laird
Organisation	Epping Boys High School

Presentation Summary	This session will guide pre-service teachers on how to make the most of their placement experience and transition smoothly into employment. Learn the key steps to take before, during, and after your placement to leave a lasting, positive impression and become workplace ready. Ideal for those looking to understand school expectations and how to stand out in a Department of Education context.
Bio	Alison Laird is the practicum coordinator at Epping Boys High School and has supported numerous pre-service teachers over the past three years. She brings practical insights into what schools look for in future teachers and is a regular presenter at professional education events.

Secondary	
Title	Positive Psychology to Avoid Burn Out
Location & Session	Pavilion 1, Session 3
Presenter	Kath Lathouras
Organisation	Emmaus Catholic College
Presentation Summary	
Bio	

Secondary	
Title	Bungaribee Wildlife Workshop
Location & Session	EA.G.18, Session 3
Presenter	Jessica Menedez
Organisation	Sydney Zoo
Presentation Summary	Dive into Australia's unique wildlife through the eyes of First Nations peoples. In this interactive session, students will meet a variety of native animals and discover traditional ecological knowledge that informs respectful care for Country. Through hands-on experiences and storytelling, participants will learn how Indigenous perspectives shape conservation practices and foster a deeper connection to the natural world.
Bio	Jess Menendez is the Education Officer at Sydney Zoo, developing and managing curriculum-aligned teacher programs, excursions, and resources that connect native wildlife and Indigenous ecological knowledge to classroom learning.

Secondary	
Title	From Application to Appointment: Tips for Navigating Teaching Positions.
Location & Session	EA.G.19, Session 3
Presenter	Dr Chris Grima-Farell
Organisation	TeachNSW
Presentation Summary	From Application to Appointment: Tips for Navigating Teaching Positions. Penultimate and final year students, join the Teach NSW team for advice on completing your approval to teach application, gaining casual, temporary or permanent employment and accelerating your teaching career in Australia's largest education system.
Bio	

Secondary	
Title	The Best Teacher Think as a Student
Location & Session	EA.G.33, Session 3
Presenter	Phil Devitt
Organisation	Authentic student/learner-centred planning and pedagogy.
Presentation Summary	Establishing classroom teaching programmes that are planned with the student/learner as the centre of the learning experience.
Bio	

Secondary	
Title	Variable Testing – The Heart of the Scientific Method
Location & Session	EA.G.36, Session 3
Presenter	Ben Newsome
Organisation	Fizzics Education
Presentation Summary	Learn classroom-tested ways to engage students in science whilst using simple materials. From kitchen chemistry to simple sound demonstrations, there are many ways students can test variables without breaking the bank.

Bio	Ben Newsome CF founded Fizzics Education in 2004 to deliver science education across Australia, having now reached over 4 million students. He is also a co-founder of Virtual Excursions Australia and the AVA Challenge. He is a qualified science teacher, 2013 Churchill Fellow, 2020 AMP Tomorrow Maker, thrice Australian Small Business Winner in Children's Education Services, and 2020 WSABE Outstanding Business Leader of the Year. He received the 2023 UTS Chancellor's Award for Excellence and the Faculty Award for Science. He's a board member of Educating for Leadership, past president of the ISTE Interactive Video Conferencing PLN, an ambassador for the NSW Association of Science Education Technicians, in the Hall of Fame for the Center for Interactive Learning & Collaboration, author of 'Be Amazing!', and the host of the Fizzics Ed Podcast.
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Secondary	
Title	Working in the Catholic Sector
Location & Session	EA.1.23, Session 3
Presenter	Stephanie Chidiac, Jan Statton, Gerard Moore
Organisation	Wollongong & Parramatta Dioceses & Broken Bay Institute
Presentation Summary	Discover what it's like to work in Catholic education. This session will introduce pre-service teachers to a system of schools committed to a consistent and future-focused learning approach—developing students' communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking skills. Learn about the mission and values that underpin Catholic education, as well as scholarship options, employment pathways, and professional development opportunities for early career teachers.
Bio	Stephanie Chidiac, Jan Statton, and Gerard Moore represent Catholic education and bring a wealth of experience supporting new educators. They will share practical insights into teaching in Catholic schools, the support available to early career teachers, and how the system nurtures both student growth and teacher development.

Secondary	
Title	Formative Assessment of Reading for Stage 4 students

Location & Session	EA.1.27, Session 3
Presenter	Shelley Rosen
Organisation	NSW Department of Education
Presentation Summary	This session will provide teachers with a practical understanding of the reading process and how formative assessment can enhance reading instruction for Stage 4 students. Participants will explore strategies for incorporating formative assessments into their classroom practice to support student growth in literacy.
Bio	Shelley Rosen is a teacher at Chifley College Mt Druitt Campus with experience in secondary education. She specialises in supporting educators to improve reading instruction through formative assessment strategies.

Secondary	
Title	Being teacher ready from a school perspective
Location & Session	EA.1.28, Session 3
Presenter	Herbert Wong
Organisation	Northern Beaches Secondary College
Presentation Summary	Most pre-service teachers begin with clear ideas about how they plan to teach. However, the reality of the profession involves much more than classroom instruction. From administrative duties and staff meetings to extracurricular commitments, these additional responsibilities can quickly impact your time and focus. This session offers practical insights into what it really means to be teacher-ready, exploring the broader expectations of the role and how to confidently transition into a secondary school environment.
Bio	Herbert Wong is the practicum coordinator and Head Teacher Administration at Mackellar Girls Campus, a government comprehensive high school for girls. With extensive experience supporting pre-service teachers, he offers valuable perspectives on preparing for the demands and realities of the teaching profession.

Secondary	
Title	Trauma Informed Classroom Practices
Location & Session	EB.G.02, Session 3
Presenter	Jacquelyn Holmes & James Wade

Organisation	NSW Department of Education – Curran Public School
Presentation Summary	This presentation provides an overview of trauma, how students who experience trauma can be affected, and how their behaviours may impact the safety and learning of others. It also explores practical classroom strategies, centred around the three pillars of trauma-informed practice, to help create environments that support all students- including those with trauma.
Bio	<p>Jacquelyn has over a decade of experience in teaching in early childhood intervention settings and primary schools K-6 in both the mainstream and support unit classes. She has been an assistant principal across multiple schools and is currently in the role of Assistant Principal Mentor at Curran Public School, an off class role, dedicated to mentoring and coaching early career teachers. Jacquelyn has led the implementation of wellbeing practices in complex school settings, providing professional learning on trauma informed practices and developing school systems for inclusive and trauma informed practices to engage all students and proactively support behaviour.</p> <p>James Wade: James has done extensive work at Curran Public School to create a culturally safe learning environment for all students through his expertise in wellbeing practices. He has worked to embed Zones of Regulation and Berry Street Education Model practices and has shared incredible success with students through his Engagement Group initiative. James is currently leading a project to weave learning dispositions and Aboriginal 8 Ways Pedagogy into teaching and learning programs school wide. James is employed as an Assistant Principal Engagement & Wellbeing and has been instrumental in driving a cultural shift at Curran Public School towards more inclusive and trauma informed practices.</p>

Secondary	
Title	Empowering your teaching career; Rights, Responsibilities and Professional Support.
Location & Session	EB.3.22, Session 3
Presenter	Peter Criticos

Organisation	Independent Education Union NSW/ACT
Presentation Summary	This workshop will provide pre-service teachers with essential knowledge about their professional rights and responsibilities, the importance of union membership, and practical tips for navigating the early stages of their teaching career. Attendees will gain insights into building a successful, sustainable, and fulfilling teaching journey.
Bio	Peter Criticos represents the Independent Education Union NSW/ACT, advocating for teachers and support staff in non-government schools on issues of fair pay, working conditions, and professional development opportunities. He works directly with members to provide guidance and support that helps educators thrive throughout their careers.

Secondary	
Title	Future ready learners in a diverse world – Ethical and Cultural Literacy in an AI world.
Location & Session	EB.3.33A, Session 3
Presenter	Anisha Lakhani
Organisation	Independent Educational Consultant
Presentation Summary	This workshop focuses on developing future-ready learners by fostering ethical, cultural, and religious literacy in increasingly diverse classrooms. Pre-service teachers will gain practical frameworks and strategies to create inclusive and respectful learning environments, tackle stereotypes and biases, and encourage dialogue on diverse perspectives.
Bio	Anisha Lakhani is an educational consultant with expertise in cultural, ethical, and religious literacy. She has published a paper in the <i>Journal of Values and Beliefs</i> and is passionate about preparing students to navigate a diverse, AI-driven world.

Secondary	
Title	Building Resilience and Sustainability to Thrive in Complex Schools
Location & Session	EB.3.17, Session 3
Presenter	Mt Druitt Network
Organisation	NSW Department of Education

Presentation Summary	<p>Entering the teaching profession is both exciting and daunting, particularly in complex school environments. This workshop equips pre-service teachers with the tools, mindset, and practical strategies to navigate their first years with confidence and resilience. Through real teacher voices, participants will hear first-hand experiences of working in diverse schools, confronting common worries, and myth busting misconceptions. Discussions will explore the importance of an equity mindset and trauma informed approach, helping new teachers build strong, supportive relationships with students. Practical strategies for classroom presence and management will be shared, including how to gain and maintain control through the creation of safe, inclusive learning environments. Participants will leave this session with increased confidence, practical tools, and a clearer sense of what it takes to thrive in a complex school setting. Participants will be encouraged and supported to engage further with Mount Druitt Network schools post-conference, including opportunities for school visits to offer a deeper understanding of context and culture.</p>
Bio	