



Education Centre  
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**TO: PRESCHOOL DIRECTORS, PRINCIPALS, GOVERNING COUNCILS,  
AFFILIATED COMMITTEES**

**RE: RECOGNITION OF PARENT PARTICIPATION IN PRESCHOOLS AND  
SCHOOLS**

One of the key elements in children and students achieving success and wellbeing is the active participation of parents, families and caregivers in our schools and preschools. I wish to acknowledge and reaffirm our clear commitment to support parent participation in the education of their children.

Studies confirm that parent involvement makes an enormous impact on students' attitude, attendance, and academic achievement. Active involvement of parents and families also adds to the effectiveness and vibrancy of our preschools and schools, helps parents learn more about their local DECS services and promotes better cooperation between home, preschool and school. Parent involvement varies widely and includes such activities as reading to children, accompanying children and students on excursions, participating in working bees, assisting in the canteen, fundraising and participating in committees.

Parents are the foundation of our governing arrangements and their importance is recognised legislatively in the requirement that all our governing bodies must have a majority of positions for elected parents. Our formal participatory structures in schools include a range of choices for parents including Governing Councils and Affiliated Committees (parent clubs, sporting groups, ethnic communities, Yurrekaityarindi etc).

Under our local governance and management framework, affiliated committees have constitutional status and protection through their DECS approved constitution. This protection covers general indemnity, insurance and financial matters. If groups operate without such a constitution, they forego the protection that comes through these arrangements.

Affiliated Committees often contribute significantly to fund-raising that adds greater value to the services we can offer through our schools. Affiliated Committees may operate their own accounts but I encourage them to link with the local School Governing Council Consolidated account.

Whether an Affiliated Committee operates a separate account or chooses to operate an account line through the School Governing Council Consolidated account, the committee retains its authority over the expenditure of its funds. To protect all concerned, only recorded approved motions at a meeting of the Affiliated Committee should be used to authorise expenditure. To ensure that the funds contribute to priority areas, as determined through the Financial Advisory Committee and approved by the Governing Council, it is wise that affiliated committees seek to be part of the budget deliberations.

I urge preschool directors, principals, governing council and affiliated committee members to acknowledge all the contributions made by parents. I also ask them to acknowledge the importance and value, we, as a public education community, place on the participation of families and caregivers at our local sites by ensuring that a parent participation policy has been developed and is in operation in all sites.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks and appreciation of the diversity of support our preschools and schools receive, and depend on, from the parents, families and caregivers of the children and students in our services.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Steve Marshall  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Date: 9 November 2005