



# ENGADINE WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL

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## Public speaking competition

Dear parents/carers,

This note is to let you know about a change to our approach to public speaking at our school.

Public speaking skills are an important part of classroom learning. In line with the updated NSW K-6 English curriculum, students are explicitly taught to express opinions, discuss ideas, and present in pairs, groups and whole class discussions. They learn persuasive writing techniques through a range of mentor texts and engaging topics.

The new syllabus moves away from stand-alone speech writing units and instead embeds persuasive writing within **authentic, varied, and engaging literacy experiences**. Students still learn to be persuasive - but now with **greater focus on purpose, real-world contexts, and flexible expression**.

To align with these changes, we will no longer run a compulsory whole-school public speaking (prepared and impromptu speeches) competition. Instead, it will become an opt-in enrichment opportunity for any interested students from Early Stage 1 to Stage 3.

We are still committed to supporting students who are passionate about public speaking through different opportunities at our school, including the public speaking competition. Please discuss with your children whether they are interested in participating in the school competition. The school competition will still have stage winners which will then feed into the zone, region and state competitions as has been the program at our school for many years.

Teachers will ask students in their classes in the coming weeks if they are interested in participating in the school competition. Interested students will be supported at school in the early stages of prepared and impromptu speech development.

The timeline for Stage 3 remains unchanged and will proceed as outlined in the note distributed on 12 May 2025.

Thankyou for your support as we continue to align our teaching and learning practices with current curriculum outcomes in each stage.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sue Roach', followed by a small dot.

Sue Roach  
*Principal*

## Key content from the English syllabus related to persuasive writing:

### 1. Focus on Purpose and Audience

*Students learn to:*

- Understand why texts are written (e.g. to persuade, inform, entertain)
- Tailor their language to suit a purpose and audience
- Explore how authors influence readers through word choice, structure, and tone

### 2. Exposure to Persuasive Texts Across Modes

*Persuasive writing is not isolated—it appears across:*

- Written texts (e.g. opinion articles, advertisements, letters)
- Spoken texts (e.g. discussions, debates)
- Multimodal texts (e.g. websites, posters, videos)
- Students engage with a range of mentor texts to understand persuasive features.

### 3. Key Language Features Taught

*Across all stages, students develop skills to:*

- Express opinions clearly
- Use evidence or examples to support points
- Apply persuasive devices like rhetorical questions, emotive language, and repetition
- Organise ideas logically using cohesive devices (e.g. conjunctions, paragraphs)

### 4. Gradual Progression

- In early years (K–2), students give opinions and reasons orally and in writing
- By Stage 2 (Years 3–4), they begin structuring arguments more formally
- In Stage 3 (Years 5–6), they refine persuasive writing for different audiences and contexts

### 5. Emphasis on Real Contexts

*Persuasive writing is often taught:*

- As part of units in other learning areas, (e.g. writing to persuade about an environmental issue)
- Through discussion-based tasks that lead to written responses