



Chair Report

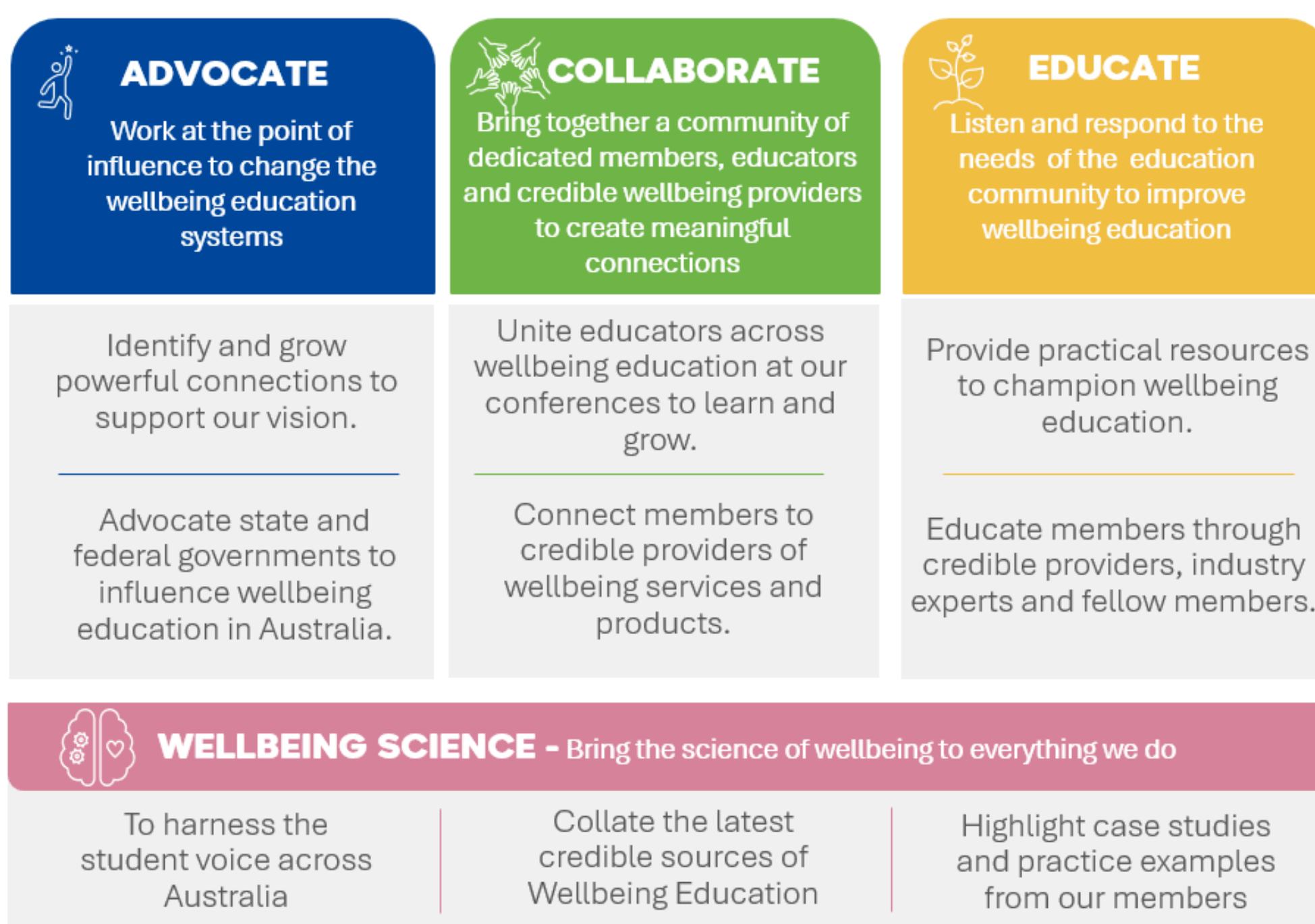
PESA 2025 Annual General Meeting

Leonie Abbott, PESA Chair
27th November 2025

It is my pleasure to present the activities and achievements of PESA over the past 12 months.

This year we launched an annual learning, 'Starting Well, Finishing Strong' plan to underpin and guide our initiatives throughout the year. This theme has aligned and united our efforts around a central goal, amplifying the impact we deliver to our community. Through this theme, our online professional development sessions, state chapter events, newsletters, and resources have complemented one another, creating a cycle of growth and expanding knowledge across within the PESA community.

Aligned with our theme Starting Well, Finishing Strong, we continued delivering our digital professional development program. This year, we hosted seven online sessions, reaching more than 600 attendees. Each session reflected our commitment to advancing wellbeing education, guided by the **EDUCATE pillar of our strategy**: to listen and respond to the needs of the education community to strengthen wellbeing education. A heartfelt thank you to our presenters, who so generously shared their expertise and made these sessions possible.



Warren Symonds, our previous past chair made the comment at the recent PESA Conference that “PESA people share”. This resonated because PESA is a community united by the mission of elevating and collaborating so that more students benefit from wellbeing initiatives in all schools. Our **State Chapters** have been busy creating meaningful opportunities for connection and growth. It is perhaps the place where our **COLLABORATE** pillar is most evident. Our Chapters serve a powerful role in welcoming and mentoring schools new to embedding wellbeing. We thank all who have contributed in this more localised communities.

PESA Chair Report

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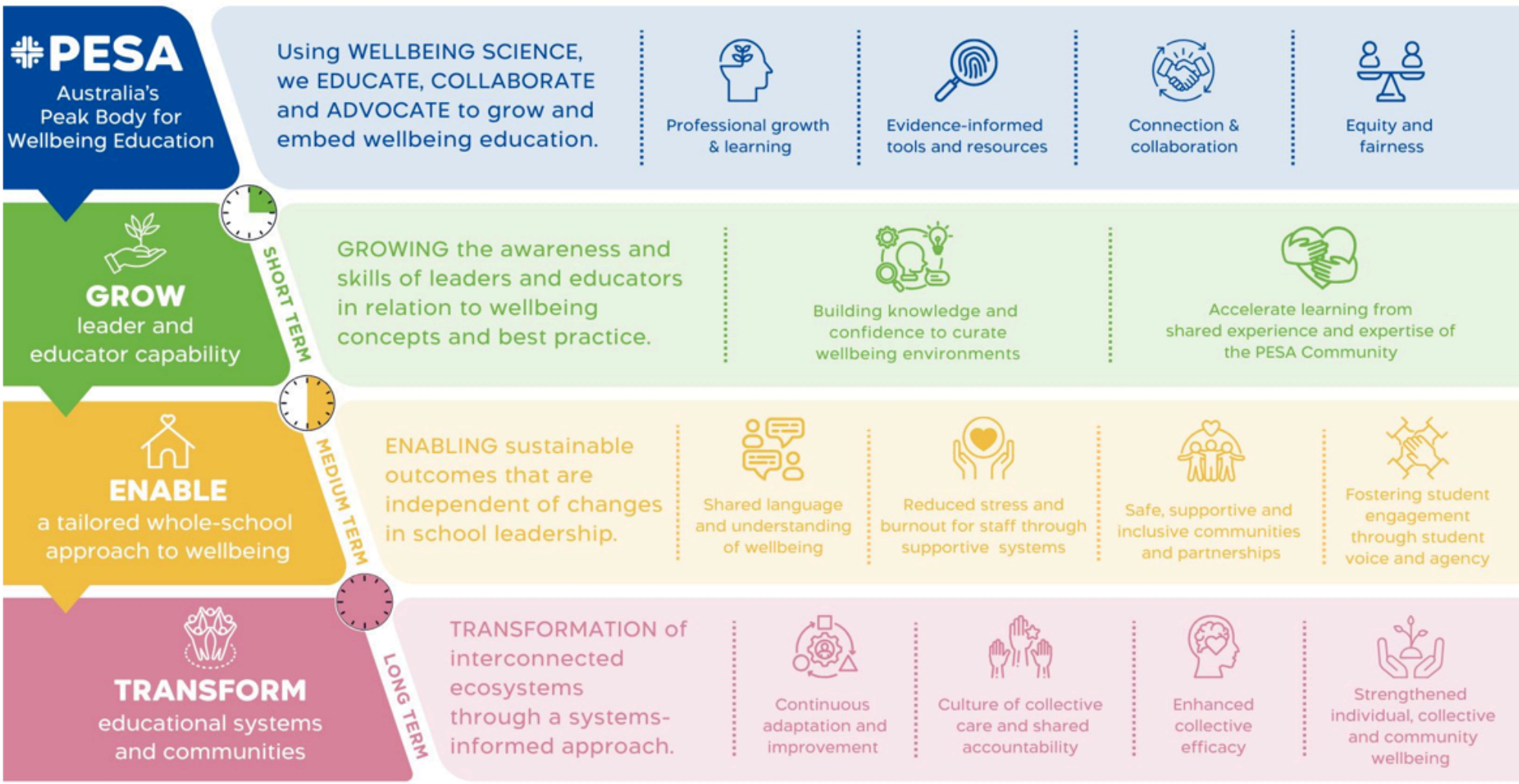
- In **Western Australia**, members came together for a networking event to explore key insights from our online professional development sessions, building on the ideas shared through those learnings.
- In **Queensland**, a brand-new committee was formed this year, bringing fresh ambition to connect and support educators across the state. They're currently running a Finishing Strong Together Challenge on Facebook, sharing weekly challenges and insights to help educators end the year with purpose. I encourage you to check it out if you haven't already.
- In **Victoria**, we hosted an in-person interactive workshop focused on the technique of open-to-learning dialogue. This powerful approach helps balance wellbeing, performance, and relationships in school communities.
- And **New South Wales** recently delivered a series of workshops to strengthen staff mental fitness. We heard directly from leading experts and practitioners, who shared current research and practical strategies to enhance both personal and team wellbeing in school settings.

These activities highlight the strength of our chapters and the incredible impact they're having across the country. On behalf of our Board and CEO, I wish to express our deep gratitude to each individual serving on our chapter committees for their dedication and efforts in organising these events. We deeply appreciate all that you do. This is an association built on good will with a view to promoting wellbeing across our country. Without the efforts of passionate and committed educators to connect educators who are often working in isolated settings within schools our growth and the growth of wellbeing in schools is disconnected.

This year, we returned to our **National Wellbeing Education Conference**, which was held in Adelaide in September. The energy that comes with congregating educators who are truly committed to serving the wellbeing of young people was palpable. It can be tiring work being an advocate for wellbeing as a minor voice within a school which is why being part of a community like PESA is so important for educators. We raise each other up and it was fabulous to learn from each other in a meaningful way. I'd especially like to thank the SA team who worked hard to make the conference a success and special thanks to the staff and students from Scotch, CBC and Pulteney Grammar who used the conference to extend the learning for their students by surveying attendees on sleep or teaching them new ways to promote wellbeing amongst students at their schools. Other key highlights from the conference included:

- Over 300 attendees from Government, Catholic, Independent, Early Childhood and Tertiary sectors.
- A 92% satisfaction rate from attendees.
- 4 keynotes, 15 masterclasses and 4 solution summit workshops.

PESA Value Map



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Throughout 2026, we have worked to strengthen our relationships within the philanthropic sector, recognising that partnerships are essential to expanding our reach and supporting the schools that need it most. A core business of our **ADVOCATE** pillar. This has been a significant focus for PESA, and we are proud of the progress made and I'd like to thank Simon Martin and Andy Skidmore for their stewardship of this work along of course with Lisa!

Over the course of this year, we secured funding that enabled us to offer scholarships to nine regional schools, providing them with PESA membership, access to our professional learning, and for some, the opportunity to attend the National Conference. For many of these schools, this support opened doors to resources and networks that would otherwise be out of reach due to financial or geographic barriers. We are deeply grateful to the generous funders who share our belief in the power of wellbeing education. Their investment is creating genuine, on-the-ground change for schools that often face the greatest challenges.

In August, we were excited to launch our brand-new podcast, **The Future We Shape**. This podcast creates a space for educators and leaders to explore ideas, share experiences, and spark meaningful conversations about wellbeing in education. Each episode brings together two voices: leading academics, who share evidence-based insights, and educators applying those ideas on the ground. We are very grateful to Kerrin Smith for making this idea a reality with great content for busy educators. We are always looking for new voices to feature. So if you're interested, or know someone who might be, please reach out to Lisa. We'd love to hear from you.

This has been my first year serving as Chair of our Board. It is a privilege to be in this position. I very much see my role and PESA's role in education as a connector of communities and incredibly important in advancing wellbeing in education nationally. At times PESA is compared to other for-profit organisations with their own agendas. PESA's agenda is wholistic and very much focused on providing a community that supports educators across systems. As a peak body for wellbeing education we want to support all organisations who are raising awareness and educating in this field. We do not see ourselves in competition with any organisation – rather we want to ensure all evidence-based products are amplified in the marketplace so that teachers and their students are the beneficiaries.

PESA Team

Board

Chair
Leonie Abbott
GCert BusAdmin, BEd, MAPP
Head of Wellbeing, Wesley College,
St Kilda Road Campus



Treasurer
Simon Martin
GDipAppFin, BBus
Private Wealth Manager & Philanthropist



Deputy Chair
Emma Grave
GradDipEd, GradDipArtsMgmt, BPA, MEd
Deputy Principal, Scotch College Adelaide



Elizabeth Bate
B.A. Dip. Ed., MaPP
Principal, Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College,
Tumbi Umbi Campus, NSW Department of
Education



Kayla Blakeney
B.Bus (Honours)
Business & People Transformation Managing
Director, Sydney



David Bott
BA, PGradDipEd, PGradDipPsych
Co-Founder, The Wellbeing Distillery



Dr. Debra Perich
BPE, Dip Ed, ProfCertPosEd, PhD
Wellbeing Lead, Catholic Education WA



Andy Skidmore
B. Arts, MSc. Coach Psych
CEO - The Youth Impact Foundation



Staff

CEO
Lisa Davies



**Program and Projects
Officer**
Tanya Deall



Administration
Kim Latham





At the start of the year were delighted to welcome Dr Deb Perich as a new Director on our Board. Deb is a highly accomplished leader from Western Australia who has already made a significant contribution, bringing a systems-focused and evidence-based perspective to our work. Her appointment has also enhanced the diversity of our Board, further enriching the composition of the Board that guides our association.

PESA Chair Report

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Our Board currently comprises of:

- Myself as Chair
- Emma Grave as Deputy Chair
- Simon Martin as Treasurer
- David Bott
- Andy Skidmore
- Elizabeth Bate
- Deb Perich
- Kayla Blakeney

This year, we were proud to appoint **Dr Anne Johnstone as a PESA Ambassador**. Many of you will know Anne from her nine years of service on the PESA Board, where she held the role of Chair during her final term. Since stepping down from the Board, Anne has continued to be a passionate advocate for PESA, championing our mission both nationally and internationally in her role as Chair of the International Positive Education Network (IPEN). This appointment is a fitting recognition of Anne's ongoing commitment, and we are delighted to formally welcome her as an Ambassador alongside Professor Lea Waters.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of our board, I would like to thank Lisa Davias, our CEO, for her leadership. Lisa has worked tirelessly and it is evident she is committed to PESA's mission. We are so fortunate to have someone who is willing to roll up her sleeves to make things happen as well as think strategically about the direction we are taking. I absolutely love that Lisa honestly reflects on what is possible and is willing to have those hard conversations with the board while keeping her eye on the ultimate goal of growing the value proposition of PESA. Thank you Lisa for your service.

I would also like to thank our two staff members Kim Latcham (Administration Assistant) and Tanya Deall (Program & Project Officer) for their dedication and passion. Both Kim and Tanya contribute immensely to our association, and don't always receive the recognition they truly deserve. In many ways, the backbone of PESA, and we are deeply grateful to have them as part of our team.

I would like to conclude by thanking our brilliant PESA board for all they contribute so selflessly, and for sharing their gifts and talents.

To all of our members, thank you for your support.



Leonie Abbott
PESA Chair
27th November 2025