



Public Schools Charge Extra Fee

The Advertiser reported this week that leading public schools are charging more than \$500 a year in addition to the fees set by the government.

Schools are setting higher fees than the standard Materials and Services Charges (\$211 for primary and \$281 for secondary students) to cover increasing running costs, deliver more IT-focused courses and provide alternative programs.

Brighton Secondary principal Olivia O'Neill says it is "ridiculous" to think the standard fee could cover the cost of education.

Ms O'Neill says the funding provided to government schools is well below what you would expect in a prosperous country, adding that there "has to be a reality check on what education costs".

A DECD spokeswoman said school governing councils had autonomy to increase fees, but only with the agreement of the wider school community.

"If the community doesn't support an increase then governing councils cannot legally recover the increase in the fees," she said.

[Read more](#)



Thousands Of Kids Illegally Home Schooled

The *ABC* reports that more than 50,000 Australian children will be home-schooled this year, and in most cases, their parents are doing it illegally.

It is compulsory to send children between the ages of 6 and 16 to school, or register them for home-schooling, and more parents are opting to keep their children at home.

However, thousands of parents across the country are not registered, meaning they potentially face prosecution.

In a landmark case last October, Bob Osmak from the Home Schooling Association of Queensland was prosecuted, and later fined, for not registering with the Home Education Unit to home-school his 13 year old daughter.

[Read more](#)

Last Year's Tests Kept From Parents

Parents will not be able to access copies of last year's national literacy and numeracy tests.

The ACARA, which administers the NAPLAN tests, will not make copies of the 2011 tests publicly available.

Assessment and Reporting general manager Peter Adams says the authority has moved away from publishing entire tests because of copyright issues.

He says they are also concerned about 'teaching to the test', and that examples of privately produced NAPLAN preparation kits were linking to online copies of the tests.

[Details](#)

Australian Students Falling Behind

Education Minister Peter Garrett says Australian students are falling behind other nations in the region.

The 2011 NAPLAN report reveals schools in disadvantaged and remote areas of the nation are continuing to perform poorly.

Mr Garrett admits he is concerned about how Australia is faring internationally.

The Minister says the report also reveals an increasing gap between the students at the top and bottom of the scale.

"This is not acceptable in a country as wealthy and well-resourced as Australia," he said.

In the upcoming edition of SAASSO's Term 1, 2012 School Post, we report on the COAG assessment of Australia's education standards.

The article notes in particular that South Australia has had some of the largest declines in the country.

[Read more](#)



New Year 12 Certificate Lags Behind World

The new SACE is poorly structured and leaves students less well-rounded, a leading academic has said.

UniSA associate professor Angela Scarino - a lead writer on the new national curriculum - says the new SACE does not measure up to international equivalents.

Professor Scarino says the introduction of the research project means less students are choosing to study extra humanities or languages.

Literacy should be invested in to boost success at school, Professor Scarino says, while skills taught by the research project and personal learning plan should be learned through career counselling and disciplinary subjects.

[Details](#)

Council Backs Linden Park Merger Fight

Parents and teachers at Linden Park Junior Primary and Primary schools will be backed by Burnside Council in their fight against amalgamation.

Councillor Anne Monceaux, a council representative on a committee reviewing the merger proposal, told the meeting the schools fervently opposed amalgamating for fear it would reduce their funding, programs and resources.

"Fees will have to rise by 300 per cent to maintain programs and the schools will lose about \$450,000 in funding," she said.

[Details](#)