

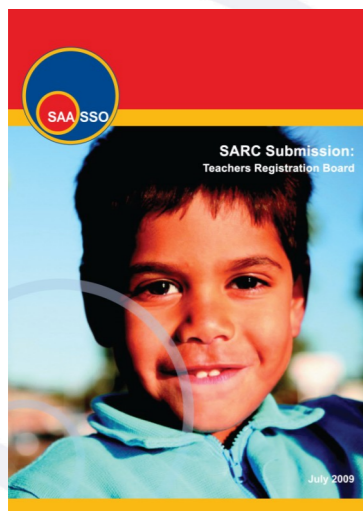
Teachers Registration Board Inquiry

The Parliamentary Inquiry into the Teachers Registration Board starts next Monday. The Teachers Registration Board is required to hold the 'welfare and best interests of children as its primary consideration'. The Inquiry, opposed by the Rann Government, will examine numerous areas of the Board's functioning, including:

- Transparency
- Composition of the board
- Evidence-gathering
- Processes to safeguard the public interest.

Ridiculously, given the importance of such an inquiry, this first hearing will last just one day, due to the upcoming state election. The inquiry is not then expected to resume before May 2010.

[More ... next year](#)



School Retention Revised

A few weeks ago, we reported that the 2009 retention rate for students in State schools from Year 8 to 12 was 77.5%.

However, the State Government has now revealed that the SA State school retention rate is higher than first calculated - still the highest in 15 years, and now sitting at 79.5%.

State Education Minister, Jane Lomax-Smith, says DECS identified a technical error in the calculation of the original estimation.

[More](#)

School Mergers Upgrade Plan

The State Government has unveiled plans worth nearly \$100 million for 10 major mergers under the Education Works program.

It has been announced that a joint contribution will see the State Government providing \$62.9 million and the Federal Government providing \$35.8 million.

Most of the projects involve mergers between junior primary and primary schools. The schools are at Modbury West, Glenelg, Flagstaff Hill, Burton, Morphett Vale, Reynella East, Magill, Salisbury, Gawler and Mount Gambier.

[Details](#)

Childcare Costs

Childcare experts have welcomed the Federal Governments changes to early childhood education and childcare - but have also raised concerns about the costs involved.

The Federal Government is planning reforms of the sector, including improved staff-to-child ratios, higher staff qualifications and a rating system for centres.

However, President of Childcare SA and Childcare Associations Australia, Barb Langford, says five childcare centres have calculated the extra cost could range from \$18.36 to \$37.34 per child per day - with some of that increase having to be passed on to parents.

She adds, those who cannot cope with the higher costs will be forced to give up childcare and either leave their jobs or turn to unregulated 'backyard' childcare.

[Full Story](#)

Academic: Send Youth To The Bush

An Adelaide expert says secondary city students should spend up to a semester in a country school to revitalise rural Australia.

Professor John Halsey of Rural Education and Communities is pushing for a program to allow students the chance to live in the country to boost rural school enrolments, as well as giving more youth a firsthand experience at life in regional areas - which may lead them to later seek out career opportunities in the country.

[More](#)

Super School Blow-Out

A few months ago, we told you the Auditor-General was asked to investigate claims that the \$323 million public/private partnership to build six super schools was \$10 million more expensive than if the government built them itself.

This week, more claims of wastage have now been revealed - with reports that private operators will be paid \$27 million a year to run the super schools.

Under-Treasurer Jim Wright provided the \$27 million figure to the parliamentary Budget and Finance Committee in August but warned it was "designated confidential".

Opposition finance spokesman Rob Lucas said there had been a "massive blowout" in the annual payment from an original estimate of \$13 million per year, to \$27 million per year.

[Details](#)

This is the last 'SAASSO Education Update' for 2009.

It will be back in 2010.

SAASSO wishes you all a safe and happy festive season.