



2010 Federal Election Promises

With the August 21 election looming, both Labor and Liberal have begun to release their policies.

Although education does not appear to play a large role, both parties have announced some education-related promises.

LABOR

A re-elected Labor Government will launch a new national trade cadetship where students will be able to participate in a new work experience initiative.

The \$3m program would enable vocational education and training to be recognised at school and count towards future qualifications.

The program would start in 2012, with 50,000 work experience places in the first year.

LIBERAL

Meanwhile The Federal Opposition has promised to raise the education tax refund rebate if they win government

Mr. Abbot says the 50% rebate will be lifted to \$500 for each primary school student and \$1000 for each secondary student - raising the spending limit for the rebate to \$1000 for primary school students and \$2000 for high school students.

In addition parents will be able to claim the cost of school fees in the expanded rebate – which will start on January 1st 2011.

This comes after Ms Gillard announced she will extend the rebate to include school uniform, starting July 1st 2011.

[Details](#)

Teaching Kids To Drive

Nearly half of respondents to a RAA survey believe parents do not have sufficient driving skills to teach their children how to drive properly – and should be banned from doing so.

1332 members were surveyed revealing:

- More than 49% said they did not have the skills required to teach a learner.
- More than 47% thought parents should be banned from teaching their children to drive.

However, RAA manager of mobility and safety, Wendy Bevan, said it was not practical to ban parents from instructing their children. "Instead, they should be supported to ensure they have the confidence and the skills required to teach a learner driver how to drive correctly".

[More](#)

Principals Teacher Pay Concern

After an enterprise bargaining dispute lasting two years, and a new pay band created by the IRC, principals are now being advised not to sign teachers on to the highest available pay scale.

The SA Primary Principals Association has raised concerns that the Step 9 classification rewards length of service rather than quality of teaching – which has been an ongoing issue in relation to teacher / performance pay.

Association President, Steve Portlock, said principals supported teachers' hard work being recognised but they wanted greater clarity over the approval process.

[Full Story](#)

Autism Students Suspended

Public schools are suspending autistic students at a rate of 3 a week, with figures in the 'Sunday Mail' revealing a growing number of violent confrontations involving disabled children.

Data from Autism SA, reveals 96 students with Aspergers syndrome or other autism-related disorders have been suspended since the start of this year, with 69 removed from campus last term.

A register of 'critical incidents' obtained by Family First MLC Robert Brokenshire reveals there were 30 emergencies involving disabled students – including students hitting and threatening teachers and classmates – in the first 5 months of this year. This compares with 58 similar incidents in 2009 and 12 in 2008.

[More](#)

Principals Outline 'Wish list' For Election

In the lead up to the federal election, the Australian Primary Principals Association has outlined what they want the next Government to deliver.

Last week, they sent a set of questions to the major political parties requesting their support for primary education and seeking resources for the following four areas:

- Specialist science training.
- Support for students with disabilities
- Greater transparency of school funding.
- A need for greater flexibility in handling the social & emotional learning needs of students through chaplaincies, counsellors, etc.

[Details](#)

Year 12 School Leavers

A new survey, the '2009 Sample Survey of SA Year 12 School Leavers' paints a picture of what students who graduated in 2008 did in their first year out of school.

The Centre for Post Compulsory Education and Lifelong Learning conducted the survey to better inform school sectors and the SACE Board of directions students take on completing their senior secondary education.

Almost 2000 young people were surveyed revealing:

- 14% of school leavers (up 2% on 2008) deferred their study, and of that number 47% cited financial reasons for doing so.
- 1 in 10 mentioned wanting to work to qualify for Youth Allowance.
- More than 35% said they wanted a break from study, and about 24% said they wanted to travel.
- Almost 94% of school leavers were either studying, working or training in the following year.

[More](#)

School Bus Contracts

The State Opposition says regional school bus operators are facing uncertainty because the SA Government will not offer long-term contracts – with only two-year rollover contracts being offered and 65 of these expire at the end of 2010.

Liberal MP Peter Treloar says short contracts mean many country operators may decide not to update their bus fleets – such as installing seatbelts and air conditioning.

[More](#)