$5m Scheme A Boost For Rural Schools

A national remote teacher service, The ‘Teach Remote’ program, is being developed. The $5m scheme will focus on attracting and retaining high-quality teachers in the remote areas of Australia.

The program will focus on recruiting, training, supporting and rewarding teachers working in remote communities, including an induction program for new teachers, an online course in teaching English as a second language and scholarships for high performing teachers.

Education Minister Peter Garrett says the program is vital, recognising that “teachers in remote schools usually have a much shorter length of service than teachers in urban and regional schools”.

‘Teach Remote’ will be managed by the National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools (NARIS), who currently work with nearly 30,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Classrooms Way Too Cool For School

Over 150 children in the state’s north cannot attend school after power outages leave their classrooms too cold.

A recent cold snap in the area has seen temperatures plummet as low as -3C. Coupled with the cold weather, frequent power outages leave the school’s classrooms without both light and heating.

Ernabella school principal Lisa Salomon says the recurrent power outages are a severe problem as not all of her students have shoes, socks or jumpers. Ms Salomon says, despite the best efforts of the staff, “we can’t deliver a learning program without electricity.”

Energy Minister Michael O’Brien says the State Government will take “all necessary steps” to assist with the restoration of electricity supply at Ernabella, in the APY Lands.

Students Better With No Food Additives

Students have been calmer, well-rested, and have longer attention spans as a result of an additive-free trial at an Adelaide Hills school.

Approximately 75 students from The Hills Christian Community School took part in a two-week trial run by the Food Intolerance Network of SA. Parents were encouraged to cut additives from their children’s diet.

The students were reported to be less disruptive and grumpy, and several friendship issues were resolved.

Kids Blighted By Alcohol Damage

According to a professor of pediatrics and child health, thousands of Australian children are suffering from undiagnosed alcohol-related birth defects.

Professor Elizabeth Elliott says undiagnosed sufferers of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FASD) can be considered “difficult” or “slow” and are failing to receive appropriate treatment and education.

Sue Miers says that children with FASD often have sensory disorders and are “easily overwhelmed in high sensory environments like classrooms”.

Ms Miers adds that these children require extra support, as many of them do not complete school, become involved in the juvenile justice system, develop mental health issues or drug or alcohol problems.

Family First MP Takes On Facebook

SA Family First MLC Dennis Hood is composing legislation to force Facebook to give parents a bigger role in the online activities of their children.

Mr Hood is drafting a bill which would allow parents to be better informed and to have more control over the information their children post on the social networking site.

His action was prompted by concerns from a mother who took issue with material posted on Facebook by her child. Facebook officials refused to discuss the issue with the mother and would only speak to the holder of the account; her 13-year-old child.

Teaching Rules Change Under SA Shake-up

Changes to education policy will see permanent jobs created for teachers currently on contracts, and principals having more say on recruitment.

The SA Government says agreement has been struck with the education and principals’ unions.

SA Education Minister Jay Weatherill has again said that a policy restricting teachers from working at the same school for more than 10 years is to be abolished.

Further Reading

- $5m Scheme A Boost For Rural Schools
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- Kids Blighted By Alcohol Damage
- Family First MP Takes On Facebook

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