

STUDENT STANDARDS | Bureaucrats 'turning a blind eye'

Classroom complacency

LAUREN NOVAK
EDUCATION REPORTER

PARENTS have criticised the Education Department for being complacent about the state's performance in national literacy and numeracy testing.

Next week, students across the country in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will sit for the second round of national tests. Last year, South Australia generally ranked fourth or fifth, scoring below average in 15 of 20 categories.

 **What must be done to improve literacy and numeracy standards**
adelaidenow.com.au

Most students reached the minimum benchmarks but up to 10.5 per cent fell short in some areas.

Department chief executive Chris Robinson, who described the results as "pretty good", said the department had not set specific targets for improvement this year.

The Government has a target in

the State Strategic Plan to have 93 per cent of Year 3, 5, and 7 students achieve minimum benchmarks in reading, writing and numeracy but this was set in 2007 and has not been updated this year.

Students last year met this target in four of the nine categories.

Mr Robinson said that while "we always want to get an improvement" he was not "expecting any massive change" in the results this year. This attitude has raised the ire of parents who are concerned it translates to lowered expect-

tations of students. SA Association of State School Organisations director David Knuckey, who represents the parents of 90 per cent of public school students, said he expected the department to be more proactive.

"That's bewildering that, apparently, these results are good enough - "pretty good" - and that they have no expectation or target for significant improvement," he said. "The Federal Government is out there announcing targets (for education) left, right and centre

but here it's just 'We'll hope for better, but not expect some sort of general improvement'."

Mr Robinson, instead, said educators were taking a whole-of-school approach to improving literacy and numeracy.

"The issue here is that most students reach the required benchmark in all the tests (and) there's always going to be a few per cent of kids that don't."

PAGE 16: Editorial
PAGE 17: Vote line



FITNESS: Clapham Primary School students Jannie, Kirrily and Dylan walk to school.

Picture: GRANT NOWELL

Little shoes are made for walking

CLARE PEDDIE

SOUTH Australia leads the nation in its support for the Walk Safely to School Day event, with the largest number of schools signed up.

Despite having the smallest population among mainland states, SA has at least 30,950 students from 109 schools taking part in the May 15 event, nudging Queensland into second spot.

The event encourages primary school children to walk and commute safely to school.

SA Primary Princi-

pals Association president Steve Portlock said the national day fits with the ambition of ensuring healthier students.

He said children under 10 who had to walk longer distances should be accompanied by a parent or adult.

Dylan, 8, says he walks to school every day - making next Friday's event a walk in the park for him: "I just have to walk past three houses and through the gates and then I'm at school."

□ To register, go to
www.walk.com.au



Now is the time to speak to a name you can trust

PATRICK WHELAN
WEALTH CREATION AND MANAGEMENT

Manage your Wealth efficiently and effectively

DON'T pay 5% pa to run your portfolio
LET me show you simple steps to manage market cycles

DON'T get a loan direct from the bank
LET me organise your bank loan
Bank pays me commission

You get a proper Financial Plan from me

You don't pay any extra and...

I WILL CONTINUE TO BUILD YOUR WEALTH

COME to one of my small informal seminars and ask all the hard questions

DON'T PUT IT OFF ANY LONGER

GET a sophisticated financial plan with a structure optimized for YOU

8237 0525

www.PatrickWhelan.com.au

0427 776 400 patrick@pwmoney.com.au

61 Carrington St. Adelaide

PATRICK2-5

3029002

Authorised Representative of Morrison Carr AFSL234716



How the Federal Budget affects you

EXTENSIVE COVERAGE AND EXPERT ANALYSIS

16-PAGE LIFTOUT IN The Advertiser NEXT WEDNESDAY