



This week's stories from the media

- Birmingham calls for support for childcare rebate
- More parents home schooling in SA
- Furore over fat cat pay rises
- Autism stigma blamed on poor training, funding
- Education cuts to fund Holdens
- Calls for same sex classes for maths

More Parents Home Schooling In SA

The most recent figures show that in 2014, 651 families - encompassing 1119 children aged between six and 17 - had completed the approval process to educate at home. This figure has been steadily increasing, up from 374 families - encompassing 714 children — in 2006. .

A spokesperson for the Education Department said: "South Australia's data reflects an upward trend towards home schooling, which is comparative with a national increase being experienced across Australia".

Public schools need more freedom to adopt alternative teaching systems and the Education Department must not put up barriers to changes that meet local needs, the Opposition says.

The Liberal Party's new spokesman, John Gardner, said school communities should have the chance to offer systems such as Steiner, Reggio Emilia, Montessori and the International Baccalaureate.

[Read the full story](#)

Birmingham Calls For Support For Childcare Rebate

Senator Simon Birmingham has written to crossbenchers calling for support for childcare rebates to help low income families.

Education Minister Simon Birmingham has penned a letter to the Senate crossbenchers urging them to ignore "extensive misreporting" about the impact of Turnbull government's childcare package.

The letter cites new Department of Education modelling showing 815,700 families will be better off under the new single childcare subsidy, with the majority of these winners low to middle income families earning between \$65,000 and \$170,000.

Around 140,500 families, spread across all income brackets, will feel no impact from the changes, which would come into effect from July 1, 2017 if the childcare reforms pass the Senate.

But around 183,900 families - or 16 per cent of all families using childcare - would be worse off under the reforms.

Almost 60,000 high income families will lose out as a consequence of the decision to

reduce the subsidy rate from a flat 50 per cent for income earners over \$250,000 down to just 20 per cent for people families earning \$340,000 and above.

"The Government stands by the principle that child care support, heavily subsidised by the taxpayer, must give preference to those who are working, training, studying or volunteering," he says.



He also justified the benchmark price, saying it would "prove invaluable for families and ensure the rapid growth in child care costs does not continue".

In order for the childcare package to pass, the government must secure the support of six of the eight Senate crossbenchers.

[More](#)

“More than half of Australians do not meet the international standard for the basic numeracy skills needed to operate effectively in the workplace and society.”

Furore Over Fat Cat Pay Rises

In December, The Advertiser revealed that education department chief, Tony Harrison was of several SA public service bosses who had received ‘outrageous pay rises, despite running one of the ‘most poorly performing’ State Government departments.

Mr. Harrison, also responsible for Families SA, received a \$51,675 increase in 12 months - bringing his salary to \$450,000.

News of the pay rises prompted criticism from the teacher’s union, child welfare advocates and the Opposition.

Union president David Smith said, ‘it sticks in the throat of our members’. Mr. Harrison’s pay rise was five times greater than that being offered to teachers. ‘Quite frankly, we are outraged.’

Opposition spokesman Rob Lucas said it ‘seems extraordinary that after all the recent child protection controversies and other problems in DECD that the CEO would be rewarded with a massive pay rise’.

[More](#)

Autism Stigma Blamed On Poor Training, Funding

A recent Senate inquiry found parents of kids with autism are actively discouraged by some schools from enrolling their child.

Rozanna Lilley, from Macquarie University’s Institute of Early Childhood and mother of a son with autism, said school choice is “severely limited” for a parent whose child has autism.

There are two main factors that lead to stigma, Lilley explained:

1. insufficient professional development - educating principals and teachers about methods of positive behaviour support would go a long way in helping - and stop punitive actions against kids with autism.
2. unstable disability funding for schools - a stable funding environment would give principals certainty of the resources available to help these students.

[More](#)

Education Cuts To Fund Holds

Education programs are to be cut or scaled back to help pay for a \$5.5 million State Government plan to save Adelaide’s north from the fallout of Holden’s closure.

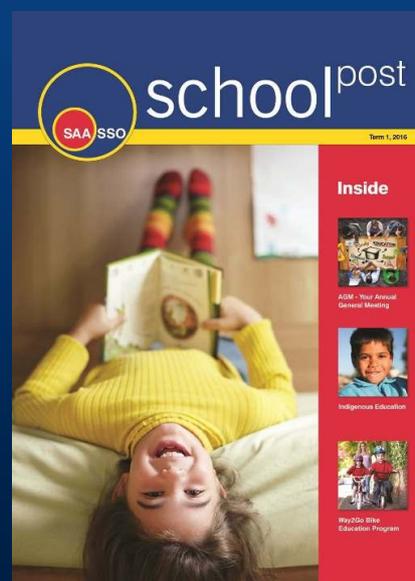
The Advertiser reports that the Government has conceded it cannot afford to fund its plan and intends to slash other services to pay for it.

One program reported to be in the firing line was the Education Department’s Flexible Learning Options program - in which disengaged students are taught the school curriculum outside normal classrooms.

[Full Story](#)

School Post

The Term 1 edition of School Post will be in schools soon.



Call For Same Sex Classes For Maths

Call for more gender segregation in schools to encourage more girls to stick with maths and sciences.

Education leaders want girls and boys taught separately to lift female participation and performance in maths and sciences.

“Girls are being told very early on, like all children, that maths is hard and people don’t have confidence in their mathematical abilities. So they drop it.”

“We have known for a very, very long time that in the classroom, boys get more attention than girls.”

[Read more](#)