



This week's stories from the media

- Almost 180 SA teachers accept \$50,000 burnout bonus
- SAASSO Survey: Christmas carols
- Liberals would review SACE to boost languages
- Inquiry wants schools to teach about forced marriage
- Teachers need transgender training
- Parent complaints up 28%

SAASSO Survey: Christmas Carols

The South Australian education department has released a new policy for religious activities in schools.

Among other topics, it specifically references Christmas carols in our public schools.

The policy possibly implies that Christmas carols are faith-based messages and that schools must not promote a specific set of religious beliefs. Further comments from the State Government have not resolved the confusion.

While we wait for clarification on what the new Christmas carol section of the policy means, we are asking what you think....



[Take the survey](#)

Almost 180 SA Teachers Accept \$50,000 Burnout Bonus

A multi-million dollar blowout in "burnout bonuses" for older teachers to leave the profession has been revealed, with almost twice as many set to take the \$50,000 payments as originally intended.

Education Minister Susan Close has told a parliamentary estimates committee that 179 teachers had accepted the exit bonuses from 190 offers. There were 257 registrations of interest.

The "teacher renewal program" was announced in March, offering 100 of the "separation benefits" at a total cost of \$5 million. That will now be \$8.95 million.

Eligible teachers had to be aged 55 and over, in a permanent position, and must not have done significant professional development in contemporary teaching methods in the past three years.

The Government has argued the program is "low cost over time" because the older teachers' replacements will be less experienced and on lower wages.

But Opposition education spokesman John Gardner, who led the questioning in the committee, said unmotivated teachers who had got away with doing minimal, easier professional development should not be rewarded.

"It's incentivising failure. We should be incentivising excellence. The good teachers ... would feel maligned by comparison," Mr

Gardner said.

[More](#)



“...Those of us who have been born and brought up in Australia think forced marriage is something that happens in strange and far away places....”

Liberals Would Review SACE To Boost Languages

A state Liberal Government would review SACE to boost numbers of Year 12s studying languages.

Forcing Year 12s to do an extra subject to gain university entrance, and making the Research Project optional or strictly a Year 11 subject, will be the focus of a review of the SACE if the Liberals win government.

The overhaul of Year 12 is part of an Opposition policy aimed at encouraging more students to stick with a foreign language to the end of their schooling.

Education spokesman John Gardner said the proportion of students doing a language in Year 12 had more than halved under Labor, from 11.8% when it took office in 2002 to 4.9% last year.

The policy blames the reduction of Year 12 subjects, other than the compulsory Research Project, from five to four.

Fewer than half of public schools offer languages at SACE level, the policy states.

[More](#)

Inquiry Wants Schools To Teach About Forced Marriage

A Parliamentary committee has called for federal, state and territory governments to consider including education on forced marriage in the school curriculum.

But experts warn forcing schools to take on the responsibility for teaching children about social issues risks Australian students' performance slipping even further behind the rest of the world.

The move was part of the response to the committee's inquiry into human trafficking which found there was a need to provide more information to new migrants about slavery laws in Australia.

Police evidence to the inquiry showed investigations into forced marriage had increased each year since March 2013 when the new offences were first introduced.

“The committee agrees that consideration should be given by Australian governments to including education on forced marriage in school curricula.”

[More](#)

Teachers Need Transgender Training

Male teachers have less positive attitudes towards transgender students and are not as comfortable working with them, South Australian research shows.

And teachers who have worked with transgender students before are not always more confident about caring for them than less experienced colleagues.

Instead, Flinders University researchers have found confidence is more closely tied to training - or having a transgender friend or family member - prompting calls for more professional development.

180 teachers and student teachers were surveyed to find out the capacity of schools to support trans students.

[Full Story](#)

School Post

Term 3 Edition - In School Soon!



Parent Complaints Up 28%

Behaviour management and bullying issues top a skyrocketing tally of parent complaints made to DECD, with student suspensions and exclusions a major source of disputes.

The number of complaints jumped 28% to more than 2400 in 2016.

School zoning, enrolment, department and school policies, and family law disputes were other major complaint areas.

Opposition education spokesman John Gardner said there were cases where parents had “not even received a call back” from the complaints unit “for months on end”, and repeated the Liberal Party's call for an education ombudsman independent of the department.

[Read more](#)