



This week's stories from the media

- Anti-bullying policies inadequate in many SA public schools
- SA music education crisis
- Editorial: give schools resources to tackle bullies
- Plan for schools to employ their own students
- ALP may axe school chaplains
- Preschool should focus on language
- Overhaul STEM

SA Music Education Crisis

Music educators have welcomed a review of music education amid concerns South Australia's school programs are inadequate, poorly staffed and under-resourced.

Key players in the field spoken to by InDaily agreed that school music education needed greater investment.

There are also concerns for the amount of time dedicated to music education in university teaching degrees.

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra managing director Vincent Ciccarello said the state of music education in South Australia was at "crisis" point.

"For me, the alarm bells are ringing that we're not recruiting South Australians to the orchestra and also that we're having a diminishing pool of suitably qualified and experienced casual musicians that we can call upon."

[Read the story](#)

Anti-Bullying Policies Inadequate In Many SA Public Schools

A new audit reveals almost one in 10 public schools do not have an adequate policy to deal with the issue.

Results of the audit come as new statistics show bullying continues to be parents' greatest gripe with the education system.

The audit of school anti-bullying policies, ordered by Minister John Gardner, found 12% of schools either didn't meet basic expectations or didn't have an anti-bullying policy at all.

Mr Gardner said the government is committed to ensuring all schools had strictly enforced policies that addressed all forms of bullying.

"The Department is now establishing an overarching anti-bullying strategy and will ensure that all schools have an anti-bullying policy in place that meets basic expectations by the end of the year," Mr Gardner said.

New data from the Department shows bullying and harassment of students was complained about more than any other issue.

Mr Gardner said the department will be using audit findings to ensure that schools are provided with the resources they need to keep children and young people safe from bullying, including:

- Guidance on developing anti-bullying policies
- Training staff, students and parents to identify and respond to bullying
- Advice on recognising the signs of bullying
- Communicating anti-bullying policies to the school community.



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“...funding would be better spent training qualified school counsellors....”

Editorial: Give Schools Resources To Tackle Bullies

One of parents' greatest concerns about a child's education is that he or she will become the victim of a school bully.

In fact, new statistics show bullying continues to be parents' greatest gripe with the education system.

Unfortunately, a new audit has revealed almost one in 10 public schools either do not have an anti-bullying policy.

This presents challenges for many parents. In their school days, a bully could disturb them at home only via the phone - easily detectable and punishable.

Schools and parents must ensure they have clear strategies in place to detect and deal with bullying of children.

They must equip themselves to help young people realise what is wrong and have appropriate plans to counter this behaviour.

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Plan For Schools To Employ Their Own Students

Students working for their own schools will be rewarded with shopping centre vouchers or ex gratia payments instead of hourly rates, after the state's first large-scale school employment scheme hit an industrial obstacle.

Playford International College and Wirreanda Secondary planned to formally employ about 150 students between them this year in catering, ground maintenance, tutoring and other roles.

Students were also to pitch ideas about jobs they believed needed doing around campus, and apply for grants to launch school-based businesses.

“The main issues with the industrial relations were use of the terms employment and contract and fee for service.”

the scheme would now be launched in Term 3, starting with small student numbers and a cautious approach to avoid any legal problems.

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ALP May Axe School Chaplains

The government's \$247 million school chaplaincy program could face the axe under a prospective Labor government, with ALP calling for a “secular Australia” and separation of religion and the state.

ALP Senator Doug Cameron said he was concerned for children's welfare under the scheme and that it was Labor's view that the funding would be better spent training qualified school counsellors.

The comment is likely to ignite speculation around Labor's commitment to retaining a chaplaincy program of some form, which it has previously supported while in government.

[Full Story](#)

Preschool Should Focus On Language

A new study finds that good language skills in kindergarten can predict student performance in other areas, including math and reading.

According to researchers from the University of Washington, not only does a child's use of vocabulary and grammar predict future proficiency with the spoken and written word, it also improves academic performance across other subject areas.

The study - the first to look at a comprehensive set of school readiness skills in order to determine the best predictor of a child's success later in life - revealed that language was at the top of the list.

[Read the story](#)

Overhaul STEM

A new report has called for the STEM curriculum to be changed in order to improve outcomes across the four key subject areas.

The report, by ACER, says an integrated curriculum, early intervention and a stronger teaching workforce are key to reversing Australia's downward spiral in STEM education.

“Australia's unbalanced and fragmented STEM curriculum is leading to declining interest among students.”

“We must invest in creating the same level of engagement and excitement about STEM as part of the standard program in all early childhood centres and schools.”

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