



This week's stories from the media

- People working with children need new background screening
- Adelaide High expansion
- Labour announces academy for school principals
- NSW to fund mental health staff for bullied teens
- Labour bursaries for best teachers
- No apology for new school zones
- Teachers' HECS debt to be waived

Adelaide High Expansion

Major changes at Adelaide High School: Expansion will boost capacity to 1800 students but enrolment zone will shrink.

A decision to shrink the enrolment zone for Adelaide's two public CBD high schools has sparked a political row over parents' rights to use real estate to buy their way into the school of their choice.

The State Government will remove several suburbs from the shared zone, affecting hundreds of families.

It will also spend \$18 million expanding Adelaide High School's capacity by 350 students to cope with the addition of Year 7 students and other enrolment pressures.

The Government says even without the looming shift of Year 7s from primary to high schools, enrolments would have outgrown the capacity of the two city schools.

[Read the story](#)

People Working With Children Required To Pass New Universal Background Screening

Everyone who works with children - including teachers, emergency service workers and volunteers - will need a universal background check from July.

Laws taking effect from July 1 will impose the same combined check for everyone working or volunteering with children.

Professions to be covered for the first time include teachers of preschool, primary and secondary students, emergency services and health workers, children's party entertainers and ministers of religion. Currently, teachers undergo a separate clearance via the Teachers Registration Board (TRB).

Human Services Minister Michelle Lensink said the change meant screening of all people working or volunteering with children would be nationally consistent and "puts the safety of children front and centre, as they should be".

Individuals will be able to apply for the Working with Children Check rather than an employer or volunteer organisation applying on their behalf, as happens now.

"This allows people looking to enter child-related work industries to be work ready," Ms Lensink said.



There will be a 12-month transition period. People who hold a valid child-related clearance from the Human Services Department or TRB on July 1 will be covered until that clearance expires.

The new check will replace all current types of clearances. It will be valid for five years, up from three, and will be transferable between jobs.

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“...Fewer than one in four new principals complete training before they start...”

Labour Announces Academy For School Principals

A national principals training academy would be established by Labor in government in order to boost the academic performance of our kids, and cultivate better school leaders to address Australia's poor educational performance on the world stage.

The academy will cost \$30 million over the forward estimates and will focus on advanced leadership, teaching and learning to bring Australian principals up to world standards and give our kids the edge on their learning.

Peak principals associations, along with state and territory governments and academic experts will be involved in the establishment of the academy that will deliver face-to-face training, mentorship and also virtual courses.

Fewer than one in four new principals complete training before they start.

The training will be available to current and aspiring school principals, as well as other school leaders.

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NSW Government To Fund Mental Health Staff For Bullied Teens

Two dedicated mental health staff will be sent to every public high school in NSW under a state government plan to help young people struggling with bullying and stress.

NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian is today expected to announce a multi-million dollar package for a reported 350 student support officers and 100 additional full-time counsellors or qualified psychologists in high schools.

The experts will be on hand to offer extra support and advice for students struggling with anxiety, stress and bullying.

They will also determine if students need to be referred to experts outside the school environment.

“We know in this social media age the challenges are huge, whether it's dealing with bullying, whether it's dealing with relationships, whether it's dealing with a whole range of other issues. Often teenagers need that extra support,” Berejiklian said.

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Labour Bursaries For Best Teachers

A Labor federal government would offer Australia's “best and brightest” tax-free bursaries of \$40,000 to become teachers.

Deputy Labor leader Tanya Plibersek announced the plan this morning, saying a career in teaching should be a first choice rather than a fallback.

The tax-free bursaries of \$10,000 a year will be paid to recipients for the duration of a teaching degree, up to a maximum of four years, if Labor wins this year's federal election.

Year 12 students with exceptional marks and people with outstanding achievements at university or in the workforce would compete for up to 1000 of the cash bonuses each year.

[Full Story](#)

No Apology For New School Zones

The State Government is refusing to apologise to angry families it has shifted out of the Adelaide CBD high school zone.

But a funding announcement may appease some.

The State Government has now committed an extra \$12.5 million to boost Unley High's capacity by 450 to 1700 students, meaning it will continue to be able to take out -of-zone enrolments, as well as add Year 7s by 2022.

That means families cut from the shared Adelaide High / Adelaide Botanic zone, but who don't like the schools they are now zoned to, should still find places at Unley.

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Teachers' HECS Debt To Be Waived

Despite efforts of successive cabinets, the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous outcomes has yet to be closed. Prime Minister Scott Morrison hopes a new plan will at least reduce it educationally.

It entails waiving the HECS debts of 3,100 teachers, subject to them working in remote indigenous communities for at least four years.

Set to boost 292 schools and cost \$200 million, it is a manifestation of one of Tony Abbott's recommendations in his role as the government's envoy on indigenous affairs.

It will be accompanied by a \$177 million support program.

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