



This week's stories from the media

- NAPLAN online platform fails in national practice test
- Country schools temporary problem
- Endometriosis PPEP talk program to target years 9 & 10
- The burden of lifting up the disadvantaged not evenly spread
- Students set new fundraising record
- Compulsory Internet app
- Teacher status forum

Country Schools Temporary Problem

Country schools are stuck with 10 or more “temporary” classrooms each - many of them decades old, hard to cool efficiently and prone to white ants while city schools are upgraded with new buildings.

The nearly 1500 transportable buildings in public schools across the state are, on average, more than 40 years old, with the oldest at Booleroo Centre District School dating to 1950.

Two-thirds of the total are in the regions.

Of the 18 schools with 10 or more, 16 are in the country, as are two-thirds of the 122 schools with at least five.

Area Schools Leaders president Ray Marino said the “biggest issue” was white ants attacking old timber transportables.

“There seems to be a lot of resourcing targeted at certain city Adelaide locations as opposed to country locations,” he said, adding slower country enrolment growth was “no reason to allow buildings to deteriorate”.

[Read the story](#)

NAPLAN Online Platform Fails In National Practice Test

Teachers have questioned the viability of plans to hugely expand online NAPLAN testing this year, after schools across Australia found they could not connect to the platform for a practice session.

Half of all schools around the country are expected to use the online system for the real tests in May – up from more than 15% last year.

About 350 of SA's public schools, or 70% of them, were set to take part in the practice test to familiarise students with the platform.

The SA Education Department wrote to principals saying it was aware of problems with accessing the practice test that was “affecting schools nationally”.



It advised all SA schools to “stand down” and await advice on rescheduling to another day, and for those who had been able to start, to pause and log out.

Union state president Howard Spreadbury said the system's failure in the trial meant there was “very little time between now and May” to convince parents it was reliable.

For the real tests, more than 400 SA schools, public and private, will use the system, up from 140 last year.

Mr Spreadbury said yesterday's issue called into question whether schools that used paper tests last year should risk switching to online, adding the union remained unconvinced that results from the different test types were comparable

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“...achievement outcomes are becoming increasingly connected to the level of advantage of the school a student attends....”

Endometriosis PPEP Talk Program To Target Years 9 & 10

Next term, Year 9 and 10 students at 80 public and private schools will take part in the Periods, Pain and Endometriosis - or PPEP - Talk program.

Endometriosis affects one in 10 women and can cause pain, nausea, fatigue, organ damage and infertility.

Authorities hope that increasing awareness among young people will help them avoid the average nine year wait for a diagnosis.

Delays often occur because symptoms are mistaken for digestive complaints or downplayed as “normal” period pain.

The state and federal governments have committed \$140,000 each to deliver PPEP Talk in Adelaide, Port Lincoln, Port Augusta, Port Pirie and Mount Gambier schools.

They are targeted at young women but male students will be able to attend to learn techniques such as mindfulness to manage pain.

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The Burden Of Lifting Up The Disadvantaged Not Evenly Spread

The recent political and public fallout of the school rezoning issues concerning Adelaide and Botanic high schools speak to a wider issue gripping public schools across Australia.

A segregated landscape of advantage and disadvantage, most apparent in public high schools, has emerged via changing enrolment patterns across the past 10 years.

The educated middle class has more choice to seek and buy educational advantage for their children, meaning a gravitational move to more desirable public schools.

These can raise more money to offer more curriculum options such as charging higher fees. But now these schools are bursting at the seams. The educational marketplace is having its say.

Research indicates schools with greater concentrations of high social and economic capital enrolments enjoy a multiplier effect of improved educational outcomes.

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Students Set New Fundraising Record

Woodcroft Primary School has skipped into the record books after raising more than \$30,000 for the Heart Foundation.

It is believed to be the first SA school to raise over \$20,000 in the 36-year history of the Heart Foundation’s Jump Rope for Heart program.

At the time of writing, the school led the national scoreboard – having raised a whopping \$30,801 for the Heart Foundation.

Woodcroft’s pupils even celebrated their supporters’ generosity at an all-day skipping event at the school, showing off their skills.

[Full Story](#)

Compulsory Internet App

Parents of young students at an Adelaide girls’ school will have to join a system that allows them to control their daughters’ social media and other internet use outside school hours.

Seymour College will introduce Australian company Family Zone’s cyber-safety system. The college will take charge through the school day, and parents after hours, through app technology.

The school says it will reduce opportunity for bullying.

It will be compulsory for Years 3-7 students to have the app installed on any tablet or laptop girls use at school, to allow parents to restrict after school screen time, block sites and monitor sites visited.

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Teacher Status Forum

It could be argued that the common impression of teachers and their profession is not as positive as it should be.

Factors like the perception of time spent on holidays, and reporting of industrial action, pay disputes, stress and high workloads, all play a part in devaluing the status of the profession and discouraging would-be future teachers.

This comes at time when attracting the best and brightest students to the teaching ranks is seen as a high priority.

The Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE) is hosting a forum this week to discuss ways in which this can be done.

[Read more](#)