



This week's stories from the media

- Parent survey finds support for sanitary products in school
- SA exams go digital in 2021
- Exemption to keep some Year 7s in primary school until 2024
- ATAR is the start of the journey not the end
- Tasmania bans mobile phones in schools
- A generation of children don't know how to play

SA Exams Go Online In 2021

The majority of Year 12 exams will be done on computer by 2021, as the SACE Board ramps up its nation-leading bid to make electronic assessment the norm.

And next year will be the first time most Year 12s who face exams will do at least one of them on screen.

The Sunday Mail revealed biology, the second-most popular Year 12 subject, with almost 3300 students sitting the exam this year, will be among six to switch from the traditional pen and paper next year.

The others are legal studies, nutrition, geography, tourism and Indonesian, which will be the first foreign language with an electronic exam.

Next year's additions mean about 8000 Year 12s – roughly 60% of those doing subjects with exams – will do one or more on computer. This year it was about 5600 students, or around 40%.

Online exams are done on locked browsers, so students cannot access other resources. Nearly half of Year 12 subjects do not have exams.

[Read](#)

Parent Survey Finds Strong Support For Sanitary Products In Schools

Parents and school staff overwhelmingly want the State Government to follow Victoria's lead and reduce "period poverty" by funding free sanitary products in public schools.

About 80% of 1362 respondents to a survey by parent group South Australian Association of State School Organisations (SAASSO) were in support.

The VIC Government said in September that it would spend \$20.7 million over four years providing free pads and tampons from dispensing machines in bathrooms at every public school.

While the SAASSO survey found many SA schools provided sanitary products in "emergencies", the Victorian model ensures girls who are too embarrassed to ask staff for supplies still get what they need.

SA-BEST wants the pilot to inform a statewide rollout, including primary schools. MLC Connie Bonaros said period poverty caused girls to skip school

activities or "miss school altogether", affecting their education and "potentially the rest of their lives".

Foodbank SA's distribution does not involve vending machines, instead relying on school counsellors and teachers building strong relationships with girls likely to need help.

Education Minister John Gardner said it was "already common practice in schools to have sanitary items available for students who need them".

He said schools worked with not-for-profits "to establish and maintain vending machines". "We are investigating how to expand this model to assist organisations to reach more schools and how to best target the schools that need them most," he said,

adding sanitary products were cheaper since GST was removed.



[More](#)

“...SAASSO survey found many SA schools provided sanitary products in ‘emergencies’....”

Exemption Scheme To Keep Some Year 7s In Primary School

Parents at dozens of regional public primary schools will have to apply for special exemptions if they want their children to remain in them for Year 7 beyond 2021.

The State Government has determined that the “default” position will be for all Year 7s to move into high or area schools in 2022.

The decision comes after it consulted parents at nearly 50 primary schools, all at least 20km from the nearest public high or area school, on the unique circumstances of regional communities.

It found parents in most communities were keen for their children to make the transition in 2022 so they could stay with their peers.

Education Minister John Gardner, said parent feedback showed the “vast majority” looked forward to the opportunities high and area schools would offer Year 7s in 2022.

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ATAR Is The Start Of The Journey Not The End

More than 55% of senior high school students questioned in a recent survey claimed to be aiming for an ATAR of 90 or more.

This is despite the fact that more than half the students participating in the survey considered an ATAR over 90 to be “impossible”.

The Australia-wide survey, reported in The Conversation, also revealed that 57% of participants rated the attainment of a certain ATAR as “extremely important”.

It often surprises people to learn that just one in four undergraduates is currently admitted to an Australian university purely based on their ATAR. If university is the goal, a determined student can still get there, even if they take detours along the way.

Students should also bear in mind that their ATAR is not meant to be a measure of their potential. It is simply a number based on select data. It cannot measure anyone’s entire school experience, or their individual wealth of skills and overall abilities.

[More](#)

Tasmania Bans Phones In Schools

Students at public schools in Tasmania will be banned from using mobile phones during school hours as of term two next year.

The state Liberal government on Wednesday announced the measure, aimed at tackling classroom distraction, cyber-bullying and creating happier students.

“We want kids talking to each other and having fun rather than looking at their mobile phones all day,” Education Minister Jeremy Rockliff told reporters.

Students from primary school to Year 12 will be required to have their phones “off and away” all day.

[Full Story](#)

Christmas Countdown

10 school days left this year!



Generation Of Children Don't Play

Experts say there is a generation of students who have lost the ability to play with risk-averse schools banning balls and mobile phone addictions stunting activity and socialising.

Leading parent educator Maggie Dent said the days of students playing basketball or handball or hanging out on the footy oval are gone.

“They don’t even know how to play dodge ball without someone showing them,” she said.

“Over the last 30 years there has been a large decrease in children’s aerobic fitness because they don’t have the opportunity for active play and when they do get the opportunity they don’t have the skills.”

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