



#### This week's stories from the media

- SA students perform below national NAPLAN benchmarks
- SA teacher dispute finally resolved
- Childcare costs as much as private school
- 1 in 5 kids start school with difficulties that challenge learning
- AEU slams government performance on closing Indigenous gap
- Love of maths rubs off on students
- Dodgy childcare crackdown

#### SA Teacher Dispute Resolved

The state's public teaching workforce has overwhelmingly endorsed a new enterprise agreement, putting an end to a long and bitter dispute.

A statewide ballot of 25,000 staff resulted in 78% approval for the deal, which delivers pay rises of 2.35% for teachers and 3.35% for principals and preschool directors.

There are extra incentives for teachers to work in country schools and an extra \$15 million a year to help schools cope with growing numbers of children with special needs.

"This agreement supports our ambition to be the nation's leader in education by building and retaining an expert teaching workforce," Treasurer Rob Lucas said.

The teacher's union members took actions including strikes that shut down hundreds of schools, or forced them to operate with limited programs.

Other actions included not writing comments on student report cards and holding Christmas concerts in the daytime.

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#### SA Students Perform Below National Benchmarks In 2019 NAPLAN

**NAPLAN results for last year show a decline in high-achieving South Australian students, as well as a drop in those showing up for the tests.**

The NAPLAN National Report for 2019 shows that across the test categories, an average of 9% of SA students reached high achievement levels, compared with a national average of 12.7%.

The report reveals fewer SA students showed up for their NAPLAN tests compared with many other jurisdictions. SA's worst participation rate was in Year 9, at 88.3%.

Despite improvements last year, SA students still performed below national benchmarks in writing, with an average of 88.6% of students at or above the minimum standard, compared with 90.2% nationally.

Longer term, there have been some improvements.

The state's reading scores have generally risen since NAPLAN testing began in 2008, particularly for Years 3 and 5 students.

SA Education Minister John Gardner said the State Government was investing heavily in schools to improve writing results.

"We have taken on new literacy coaches to work with schools that need extra support, particularly in this area, and we have invested more broadly in education with funding growth for schools in every budget we've delivered," Mr Gardner said.

Federal Education Minister Dan Tehan said NAPLAN was essential: "Literacy and numeracy must be the absolute fundamentals of a world-leading education," Mr Tehan said.

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**“...Literacy and numeracy must be the absolute fundamentals of a world-leading education....”**

#### Childcare Costs As Much As Private School

An Australian family on the average wage typically spends close to \$6,000 out of pocket per year on childcare, a new analysis from the Mitchell Institute shows.

This is more than the average cost of sending a child to a private primary school.

Unlike the school sector, families don't have the option to choose a low-cost publicly-delivered childcare service.

Childcare costs in Australia are among the highest in the OECD, eating up around 27% of families' incomes. Many families are being forced to choose affordability over quality.

But research shows quality preschool can deliver \$2 of returns to the economy for every \$1 invested. Children who receive quality early childhood education and care are also up to eight months ahead in learning, with the benefit still evident in adolescence.

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#### 1 In 5 Kids Start School With Health Or Emotional Difficulties

Teachers identify one in five children as having health or developmental concerns when they start school.

Socio-economic disadvantage added further to the risk of poor learning outcomes for children with emerging concerns.

Children can miss school, have trouble doing school work due to fatigue or problems learning, or feel left out from their peer group and school life.

Not all health and developmental difficulties qualify children for special needs programs. These can go under the radar.

Data from 2015 shows 17% of children had developmental concerns identified by their teacher, but did not qualify as having special needs.

The majority of teacher concerns for these children related to language (44%), which includes children not being able to express themselves or follow directions.

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#### Union Slams Government

The teacher's union has criticised the Morrison government's commitment to closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous outcomes in a number of areas, including early childhood education.

Following the release of the Closing the Gap 2020 Report, the union says the "most concerning" example of this is a drop in the number of Indigenous children attending early childhood education between 2017 and 2018.

The union's federal president has called on the government to guarantee ongoing funding for universal access to preschool for all three and four-year-old children.

[Full Story](#)

#### Love Of Maths Rubs Off On Students

Maths teachers who love their work, are more likely to embrace struggle within the classroom, taking an inquiry-based approach to learning, without jumping in to solve problems for students.

The link between teacher enjoyment and positive learning processes was discovered during a recent study, led by Dr James Russo of Monash Uni and Professor Janette Bobis of the University of Sydney.

Teacher enjoyment of teaching maths has previously been linked to other positive outcomes in the classroom, such as student enjoyment, student intrinsic motivation to learn mathematics & student-centred pedagogical approaches.

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#### Dodgy Childcare Crackdown

The Morrison government has saved \$3 billion cracking down on shonky childcare providers, and has warned others trying to rort the system they will be caught.

"We are taking tough action against dodgy child care operators who are ripping off hard-working Aussie families," Education Minister Dan Tehan said.

Mr Tehan said more than 380 services had now been listed on the Child Care Enforcement Register - which lists services that have been the subject of a sanction or immediate suspension - since its introduction two years ago.

In the three months to July 2019, eight services were added to the Enforcement Register and six services were cancelled.

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