



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

- SACE 2022 by the numbers
- SA schools telling struggling students to quit
- More than half of SA kids are living in disadvantage
- School autism policy a good start
- Murraylands school allows assistance dog
- Spike in private enrolment

#### Schools Telling Students To Quit

Secondary students are being encouraged to quit or move into vocational education courses by schools anxious to maintain high year 12 scores, a report has found.

Children and Young Person Commissioner Helen Connolly has criticised the practise, saying it was putting further stress on secondary students already under "overwhelming pressure" to achieve good results.

"Schools should not be adding to this by putting their public image above the wellbeing of students, especially their mental health," she said.

Ms Connolly said private schools were using the strategy to maintain high ATAR scores for marketing purposes while public schools wanted as many students as possible to obtain their South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).

In a new report, Ms Connolly said a statewide survey of 300 year 12 students heard schoolmates had dropped out of private or public schools at the end of year 11.

[Read Story](#)

#### SACE 2022 By The Numbers

The cohort of 2022 is made of tough stuff: they've navigated their entire senior years during a global pandemic and achieved some remarkable results.

SACE is a two-stage certificate.

Many students take Stage 1 subjects in Year 11 and Stage 2 subjects in Year 12.

There are more than 60 SACE subjects, as well as a range of modified subjects for students with intellectual disabilities.

14,571 students completed their SACE in 2022, down from the record 15,644 in 2021.

1277 Merits were awarded to 1034 students, compared to 1282 Merits to 1016 students in 2021.

Merits are awarded in Stage 2 subjects to students who gain an overall A+ and demonstrate exceptional achievement.

3660 completers were regional students.

347 Indigenous students completed their SACE.

396 students completed their modified SACE.

27,095 students completed a Year 12 subject.

Of those, 806 students were Indigenous (up 16.3%).

The proportion of SACE completers who received an ATAR increased by 1.7% to 76.3%.

43.2% of Indigenous students received an ATAR, up 10.5%.

6217 students (42.7% of completers) completed SACE with a VET (vocational education and training) component.

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***“...Schools should not be adding to this by putting their public image above the wellbeing of students, especially their mental health....”***

#### More Than Half Of SA Kids Are Living In Disadvantage

**More than half of South Australia's children are socio-economically disadvantaged, according to new research which shows how far behind our state is.**

Welfare groups have called for action after an official report card revealed more than half of all South Australian children are living in disadvantaged socio-economic circumstances.

The state government report reveals 53.6% of people aged under 18 live in disadvantaged socio-economic circumstances, compared with a national average of 38.9%.

The report, titled *How are they faring?* South Australia's 2022 Report Card for children and young people, also reveals 16 measures in which SA children have gone backwards.

“We must do more to address the growing inequality of outcomes between those children who have and those who have not.”

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#### School Autism Policy A Good Start

**Autism Inclusion Teachers will be placed in every South Australian public school this year under an Education Department commitment. Peta Spyrou says that while the policy is commendable, it already needs improvement.**

The SA Department for Education's website explains that these Autism Inclusion Teachers will:

- provide support to their fellow educators on how to best support and educate students with autism
- drive improved practice relating to autism that works for their school.

There are three areas to the current Autism Inclusion Teacher policy, which can be implemented to ensure this important strategy progresses to an A-grade standard.

1. Confirm whether all SA public primary schools have an Autism Inclusion Teacher
2. Make the Autism Inclusion Teacher role a full-time position
3. Autism Inclusion Teachers need to look beyond just autism inclusion strategies.

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#### School Allows Assistance Dog

**Murraylands high school is set to allow assistance dog companion for student with special needs.**

Logan is 12-years-old and lives with epilepsy, cerebral palsy, acquired brain injury and autism.

He relies on his assistance dog Hunter to keep him safe.

A department spokesperson confirmed the dog would be allowed to enter the school and an integration process had begun.

“The department will also provide a dog handler to look after his dog while it is on-site supporting Logan, the recruitment for this role has already begun.”

[Full Story](#)

#### International Mother Language Day

February 21 is the International Mother language Day.

Globally, 40% of the population do not have access to education in a language they speak or understand.



#### 25% Spike In Private Enrolments

**The number of Australian school students enrolled at private schools has jumped by 25% over the past decade.**

This figure includes a 3.3% growth at independent schools in 2022 alone.

The total number of school enrolments for last year increased by 0.3% or 11,795 students.

“Over the past decade, enrolments in independent schools have increased by over 25% (130,306).”

“In comparison, government school enrolments rose 11% (263,447), followed by an 8% (58,773) rise in Catholic school enrolments over the same period.”

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