



This week's stories from the media

- NAPLAN how SA students stack up against the nation
- ILF helping close the gap
- SA teacher strike
- NAPLAN how boys and girls compare
- Fewer than 1 in 5 who are behind catch up
- Importance of STEM activities in early childhood

ILF Helping Close The Gap

Government data shows that Indigenous children are 20% less likely to start school on track.

However, commentary in the report indicates that the decline may be congruent with the increase in Indigenous preschool enrolments.

According to the 2023 report, 99.2% of Indigenous children were enrolled in preschool in 2022; already exceeding the target set for 2025.

The report also shows that the number of Indigenous people aged 20-24 years achieving year 12 or equivalent has improved but is not on track to reach the 96% attainment target by 2031.

The report shows that in 2021, 68.1% of Indigenous people aged 20-24 had attained year 12 or equivalent.

The Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF) is a national charity that works with remote Indigenous communities across Australia.

[Read Story](#)

NAPLAN How SA Students Stack Up Against The Nation

Improvements in reading, writing and spelling in SA's latest NAPLAN test results are being attributed to a focus on phonics.

SA has improved its ranking against the other mainland states in six out of 20 categories in the national literacy and numeracy testing.

Data released today shows the biggest jump was in Year 5 reading, where SA rose from fifth among NSW, WA, Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania, to third.

Our reading rank also improved in Year 3 (from fourth spot to third) and Year 7 (fifth to fourth).

In spelling, SA's rank increased one place in Year 3 (fourth to third) and Year 7 (fifth to fourth).

Writing results also rose one spot in Year 5 to fourth.

NAPLAN tests were brought forward this year, from May to March, and the benchmarks for student achievement were raised.

The rankings are based on a comparison on the average NAPLAN score for each state.

Year 9 was the only level which saw a drop in rankings.

Spelling and grammar and punctuation both saw the state's ranking decrease from fourth to fifth.

Education Minister Blair Boyer said the improved results were tied to the introduction in 2017 of a phonics check for students in Year 1.

"Since then we have seen a significant improvement in those areas," he said.

[More](#)



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SA Teacher Strike

In a surprise move, Australian Education Union SA branch executives last week voted to escalate their industrial row with the state government after almost eight months of talks.

Union whistleblowers, senior government sources and a contender vying for union presidency have questioned the decision to pursue a full-day strike.

The AEU is this week asking 12,153 members to vote in favour of the strike that would happen on September 1 – the same day union executive nominations close – unless “an acceptable offer” is made by next Monday.

Senior government sources further questioned the timing of the strike threat and said there were other ways to take action without affecting children.

Union demands include pay increases of between 5.5% and 8.6% per year until 2026 and more than \$1bn in extra classroom support to ease workload pressures and manage children with complex needs.

It also wants a 20% drop in face-to-face teaching time.

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NAPLAN How Boys And Girls Compare

One in five teenage boys in SA have been identified as needing targeted tuition in writing and grammar.

For the first time, NAPLAN results have identified how many children in each year level “need additional support” to meet expectations in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation or numeracy.

Education Department chief executive Martin Westwell said NAPLAN results “provide some important insights into how students are tracking but they also show the continued need of our state with higher levels of disadvantage (than other jurisdictions)”.

Overall boys continued to perform best in numeracy, while girls outperformed boys in all other topics.

SA’s best results included about one in five girls exceeding expectations in Year 9 writing (20.5%), Year 5 and Year 7 spelling (19% and 19.4%) and Year 5 reading (19.3%).

The best results for boys were in Year 5 and 7 spelling (16.4% and 17% exceeding) and Year 5 reading (14.9 % exceeding).

[More](#)

Fewer Than 1 in 5 Catch Up

The problem of not meeting learning standards starts early, with some students behind in Year 3.

An important question is whether these students eventually catch up to their peers.

New research by the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO), indicates this is very difficult to do.

They found less than one in five students who are behind in Year 3 catch up and stay caught up. In fact, most students with early low performance are at risk of not meeting learning standards throughout their schooling with the support they currently get.

[Full Story](#)

School Post

The term 3 edition of School Post is out soon!



Importance Of STEM Activities

Over 600 school students in Victoria, SA, WA and NSW will participate in an expanded in-school learning program to increase early awareness and participation in STEM subjects.

BAE Systems and Lumination partnered with 15 schools to develop 'Beacon', a STEM program for students aged 8 to 11.

A 2022 study on STEM activities in schools shows that early exposure to STEM subjects can improve students' science skills, interest and motivation in STEM.

The study shows that students who experienced STEM subjects early in childhood developed positive views towards creativity, collaboration, critical thinking and problem-solving.

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