



This week's stories from the media

- Single sex schools score higher NAPLAN marks
- Second teacher strike called off
- Dyslexia network calls for more support for struggling students
- Switching off Sweden back to basics on paper
- Concussion experts call for contact ban in junior sport
- Words grow minds program expands

Second Teacher Strike Called Off

Plans for teachers to walk off the job later this week have been cancelled after the minister flagged 'positive' discussions.

Education Minister Blair Boyer confirmed the threat of industrial action on Friday from the union had been removed, "given a new offer from the government".

"I met with the AEU twice last week, including a meeting with the Premier, and the discussions were very positive," he said.

"The state government has today provided the AEU with a revised offer of more than \$1.3bn. This offer does reward our incredible school and preschool staff with the improved conditions they deserve."

Negotiations between the two parties are expected to continue this week, with the union asking for wage increases of between 5.5 and 8.6% – or almost 20% over three years.

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Single Sex Schools Score Higher NAPLAN Marks

Single-sex classes performed better in NAPLAN tests than their co-ed peers, analysis of NSW 2019-2022 data found.

Both reading and numeracy tests saw all students who attend single-sex schools achieve better results than students at co-ed schools.

This was especially evident in boys' school numeracy results, which were on average 11 to 12 points higher, while girls' school results were three points higher on average.

The report compared schools in line with ACARA guidelines for recognising different socio-educational backgrounds of students at different schools.

St Patrick's College for Girls principal Sue Lennox said she feels her students can learn more effectively without the added pressure of their male counterparts in the room.

"When girls are in class without the boys, they can be themselves. It is a safe place where they can ask questions," she said.

"They don't feel they have to be anyone in particular because there are no boys. They grow in confidence."

Flinders University researcher, Dr Katherine Dix agreed, stating she believes all-girl schools deliver empowering values that are attractive to parents that are not so much a factor when choosing schools for boys.

"Wanting to develop strong independent young women is a stronger driver in a traditionally male-dominated world," she said.

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“...When girls are in class without the boys, they can be themselves. It is a safe place where they can ask questions....”

Dyslexia Network Calls For More Support

Too many children are unable to read or understand basic passages of text, a new report warns.

But SA is being held up as a “lighthouse state” in moves to boost literacy levels.

A new report out today warns that too many children and adults are unable to read or understand basic words or passages of text.

The report, commissioned by Code REaD Dyslexia Network, highlights the team of literacy coaches deployed to SA schools and the introduction of a phonics check for all Year 1 students in 2017.

It notes SA students’ literacy performance is currently around the national average but forecasts the highlighted initiatives will deliver noticeable improvement in coming years.

The report also recommends states introduce a second screening when students enter high school, fund small group tutoring and one-on-one intervention for struggling students...

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Switching Off: Sweden Back To School Basics On Paper

Since young children went back to school across Sweden, many teachers have been putting a new emphasis on printed books, quiet reading time and handwriting practice, and less time to tablets, online research & keyboarding skills.

The return to traditional learning is a response to experts questioning whether Sweden’s digitalised approach to education, including the introduction of tablets in nursery schools, had led to a decline in basic skills.

The government plans to completely end digital learning for children under age six.

Although Sweden’s students score above the European average for reading ability, PIRLS highlighted a decline among Sweden’s children between 2016 and 2021.

In 2021, Swedish fourth graders averaged 544 points, a drop from the 555 average in 2016. However, their performance still placed the country seventh-highest overall test score.

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Call For Contact Ban In Sport

Leading brain injury experts have called for the banning of contact sports for all children under 14, with key figures concerned we risk raising a generation of brain-damaged kids .

Leading brain injury experts have called for the banning of contact sports for all children under 14 in Australia, following the release of the Senate inquiry into concussion this week.

Chief specialist of the Australian Sports Brain Bank, Professor Michael Buckland, says we risk raising a generation of brain-damaged kids who won’t be able to look after their parents if drastic action is not taken.

[Full Story](#)

International School Library Month

October is school library month!

The 2023 theme for ISLM is

“The School Library: My Happy Place where Creativity and Imagination flourish.”



Words Grow Minds Program

After launching in Mt Gambier, the Words Grow Minds campaign will be rolled out across the state to help give SA children the best start to life.

The program was piloted in October 2022 by the Early Years Taskforce to combat poor literacy rates among children.

“The research is clear, with up to 85% of development occurring in a child’s first three years, increasing positive interactions with young children will improve outcomes throughout their entire lives.”

Words Grow Minds provides tools, advice and resources to parents to increase interactions with their baby through talking, reading, singing and playing – research showing these make a significant difference to brain development.

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