

Super School Enrolments Down

Over the last month, we have updated you on the progress of the State Government's six 'Super Schools' – with one opening two weeks ago and another planning to open later this term.

As questions continue to be raised by parents and teachers over whether 'hub' schools would provide students with a better education, it comes as no surprise that preliminary enrolment figures show the schools will open just three-quarters full.

In an article by *The Advertiser* this week, SAASSO Director David Knuckey says "With so many schools closing around them, many parents may have been left with little alternative but to enrol their children in a super school, but clearly many parents who still have an option are choosing to send their children elsewhere."

There are several studies that demonstrate, aside from saving money and offering improved subject choice, large schools offered little educational benefit to children.

The Term 3, 2009 issue of 'School Post' includes data from these studies, highlighting the benefits of small schools, compared with larger ones.

[Read the story](#)



Feedback From 'Spy School' Story

Last week's feature in *The Advertiser* - on the rights of Governing Councils to install security cameras in schools elicited quite a bit of feedback on the *Adelaide Now* website - much of it supporting SAASSO's comments.

Parents want CCTV cameras in playgrounds

SPY SCHOOL

SCHOOL councils want surveillance cameras in schools to help fight bullying and other...
Parents are lobbying to install cameras in playgrounds...
Councils are reluctant to install cameras...
However, it believes...
They believe the CCTV cameras, which would...

"CCTV cameras can be where that like as far as I'm concerned. I have nothing to hide and only those that do would complain. If it stops one crime only then it's worth it." *Paisly of Port Adelaide*

"I think it is a must have and should be monitored every break and before and after school. When these "Super Schools" open I fear for the young Junior and primary school kids who will be witnessing some horrific behaviour by high school students and gangs...." *Fed Up of Adelaide*

"Fantastic. My Autistic son is home today because of bullying yesterday. Get it on camera so we can educate the bullies about the impact of their ways...." *Frustrated of Adelaide*

"As usual it's saasso, the INDEPENDENT PARENT group that is telling the truth about what is really happening in our public schools ... The only surprise is that Rann and his pals haven't shut you down yet? Talking about what is genuinely happening doesn't get you far in SA these days. Good on you! Keep it up." *Jess of Free SA*

".... Bring it on! I wish that my son was in a school that had surveillance. No more principals/teachers denying that bullying is happening in their school and sweeping it under the carpet...." *Bring it On of Adelaide*

[Read all the comments](#)

New Trade Training Centres

To boost vocational education pathways for students at secondary schools, funding of \$219m has been announced for 58 new Trade Training Centres across Australia.

The funding is part of a \$2.5b investment, delivered through the *Trade Training Centres In Schools* program.

The program has already seen 35 projects completed, with 130 having commenced construction, and a further 64 in either the planning or procurement stage.

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding in Round 4 of the program, which will be announced early in 2011.

[Details](#)

Homework Completed For \$2

It's been revealed that Australian secondary students are outsourcing their homework to sweatshops in India, Pakistan and Egypt, which provide English essays and maths papers for as little as \$2.

Academics have voiced their concerns about these new forms of cheating, but are not surprised it is happening.

Several websites offer either fixed-price tariffs or auction-style services, where students can put work out to tender and workers bid to take on the project. These sites state they tailor their work to display different levels of expertise.

In Australia, a more expensive site offers high school papers at \$16.79 per page - claiming it is presently working on essays & dissertations for 1,000 Australian students.

[Full Story](#)

Class Size Not Key To Results

In recent years, everyone from SAASSO to Julia Gillard, to the OECD have argued that improving teacher quality must be our primary focus to improve education.

A new report by the Grattan Institute continues this call, arguing that improving the effectiveness of teachers is the biggest economic reform governments could implement.

The report says government spending on education increased about 40% in the past decade, much of it spent on reducing class sizes - which has had no effect on improving student or educational standards.

The institute's director of school education, Ben Jensen, says improving teacher effectiveness by 10% would significantly boost student performance.

The report said smaller classes were 'intuitively appealing' but worthless if the teacher was not able to get the best out of students.

Dr Jensen nominated five main mechanisms to improve teaching standards:

- Improving the quality of applicants to become teachers.
- Improving the quality of their initial education and training.
- Evaluating and providing feedback to teachers once they're in classrooms.
- Recognising and rewarding effective teachers.
- Moving on ineffective teachers who are unable to improve.

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