



This week's stories from the media

- Parents & school staff want SACE Research Project scrapped
- SAASSO Survey
- State Government wants to track dropouts
- School children to be weighed, measured
- Minister can't access Hyde Review
- Religious education in schools

SAASSO Survey

Should all children be measured and weighed?

A report now ranks Australia as the sixth most obese or overweight nation.

With child obesity on the rise, there are calls for all Australian children to be measured and weighed during their primary school years.

What do you think?



[Complete the survey](#)

Parents And School Staff Want SACE Research Project Scrapped

Parents and school staff want the controversial SACE Research Project scrapped, a survey by key parent group SAASSO has found.

Most also oppose a union push for all teachers of students with disabilities to receive an extra allowance.

The SA Association of State School Organisations (SAASSO) survey attracted 1100 responses.

Results show 58% support for scrapping the compulsory Research Project, in which students delve into a topic of their choice.

There was even greater backing from principals and teachers for the move.

The Government has blamed the project for numbers of students doing foreign languages in Year 12 halving under Labor, as it reduces the number of other subjects university aspirants pursue from five to four.

Just 42% of respondents, and even fewer principals, backed the teacher union's fight to win a \$1219 allowance for any teacher with one or more students with a verified disability in their class.

The survey found strong support for the State Government's plan for more use of drug sniffer dogs in schools at 62%, though parents were significantly less supportive than non-parents.

The most decisive result was on the SA Secondary Principals Association's bid for all starting teachers to be employed on a provisional basis, so schools could get rid of them if they didn't meet national standards within a certain time frame. There was almost 80% support.



“...Fewer than a third agreed with fining parents of bullies, which has been proposed in at least two US states...”

State Government Wants To Track Dropouts

Students would be tracked when dropping out of the public system in a State Government bid to improve dire retention rates at some schools.

Education Minister John Gardner said he wanted to work with his department on better data collection to determine the employment and training outcomes of students who leave school early, to make sure they are not “slipping through the net”.

The statewide retention rate compares numbers of Year 12s with Year 8s four years earlier, giving a crude measure of whether kids stayed in school but not whether they completed their SACE.

But that healthy figure masks the situation at individual schools, 16 of which, all in regional areas, have rates of 50% or under.

Education Department figures supplied to The Advertiser also show more than 60 schools, including many around Adelaide, have retention rates no greater than 75%.

[More](#)

School Children To Be Weighed, Measured

Every Australian child’s height and weight would be measured and recorded in primary school unless parents chose to “opt out” of the checks under a drastic proposal to tackle Australia’s worsening obesity crisis.

Checks would be done at school for all children in Year 1 and Year 6 at minimum, or every two years at best, to better help the government understand the real scope of Australia’s “obesity epidemic”.

It’s part of a plan proposed by the Global Obesity Centre (GLOBE) to tackle the problem in Australia, which now ranks sixth highest for an overweight or obese population behind Mexico, the United States, New Zealand, Finland and Chile.

Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt confirmed to News Corp the government would consider the proposal.

[More](#)



Minister Can’t Access Hyde Review

The state’s new Child Protection Minister cannot read a key report on concerns about carers employed by her department because it was made confidential by the former Labor Cabinet.

The Advertiser understands other new ministers have also been prevented from seeing reports on issues relevant to their portfolios because they were prepared as Cabinet submissions for the former government.

The convention of Cabinet confidentiality allows ministers to keep secret documents that were prepared for Cabinet. This continues to apply after there is a change of government.

[Full Story](#)

School Post

The Term 3 edition of School Post is in school soon!



Religious Education In Schools

The existing state legislation allows public schools to give over half a day here and there to religious activities.

Under the current 1970s state law there is a vague-ish paragraph about how it’s possible for students to skip religious instruction on conscientious grounds.

Parents describe it as a grey area. Some schools don’t bother checking one way or the other.

Under the proposed law it’s made far more clear: A principal has to give notice to a family that a religious activity is on the cards. A parent can then seek permission for an exemption.

[Read more](#)