



This week's stories from the media

- Push to remove union reps from school decisions
- NAPLAN unlocks key to maths
- LGBT diversity bid enters classrooms
- Why kids need more exposure to work
- Parents can promote equality
- Calls for violence inquiry

NAPLAN Unlocks Key To Maths

A new report has underscored the importance of the beleaguered NAPLAN test for shining a “spotlight” on strategies to lift the nation’s declining mathematics performance.

Schools can turn around students’ maths results within two years by adopting highly effective approaches identified through extensive analysis of NAPLAN data, the research paper argues.

The findings, which come from research by the University of Tasmania, stem from analysis of 619 primary and secondary schools nationally that showed out-standing improvements in their NAPLAN numeracy scores over a two-year period.

The paper describes NAPLAN as “a spotlight for improvement”.

The research also confirmed that 90% of successful schools used data to better understand their students, classes, cohorts or the school, with some schools using NAPLAN data to identify misunderstood concepts to focus teaching.

[Read the story](#)

Push To Remove Union Reps From School Decisions

Australian Education Union members would be removed from merit selection panels for promotions and review committees into school amalgamation or closures under the Liberals’ draft Education and Children’s Services Bill.

Under the current Act, promotional level positions are, in part, recommended by a committee consisting of at least one union nominee.

AEU president Howard Spreadbury said union members brought “a high level of skill” and training experience to the panels.

Under the current Act, schools can be amalgamated or closed if the majority of parents or adult students are in favour of the move.

If the school community’s support is divided, the Act stipulates a review committee featuring one person nominated by the AEU must be established to vote on the school’s future.

But Spreadbury said the new Bill removes mention of the AEU in its review committee criteria.

Minister John Gardner says while the representation of staff in review committees was “tremendously important”, membership of bodies including the AEU “should not determine their eligibility to represent their fellow staff members”.

“There are, however, teachers who do not choose to be (members of the union) and I do not see why they should be excluded from participating in this service in this way.”

[More](#)



“...A new report has underscored the importance of the beleaguered NAPLAN test....”

LGBT Diversity Bid Enters Classrooms

Teachers in NSW are being encouraged to screen M-rated films depicting same-sex relationships and transgender characters during classes in a bid to promote diversity.

The NSW Teachers Federation has released a list of LGBTIQ-themed films and associated teaching resources that it claims can be incorporated into various syllabuses and are “therefore appropriate to study in class”.

The list includes the recently released *Love, Simon*, which depicts a gay teenager, *Danish Girl*, about the artist Einar Wegener who underwent one of the first sex-reassignment operations, and *Gayby Baby*, which was previously the subject of a NSW Government ban.

None of the films appear as prescribed texts within the NSW curriculum and several have an M classification, meaning they are not considered suitable for those aged under 15 years.

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Why Kids Need More Exposure To Work

All students need to experience the world of work, particularly work of the future, long before they leave school, according to a new report out today.

The latest Mitchell Institute report, *Connecting the worlds of learning and work*, says collaborating with industry and the community is vital to better prepare children and young people for future work and life. And governments need to play a leading role to ensure this happens.

Jobs in the digital age, and the skills and capabilities required to do them are transforming at an unprecedented rate.

Schools alone cannot be expected to foster the complex combinations of STEM, digital and transferable skills, like collaboration, problem solving and communication, that young people will need in their future careers. That’s in addition to core skills like literacy and numeracy.

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Parents Can Promote Equality

On average, at least one Australian woman is killed by a current or former partner a week, and about one in six women have experienced sexual or physical violence since the age of 15.

Rigid gender roles and stereotypes of masculinity and femininity are key drivers of violence against women.

To create lasting change, prevention needs to encompass multiple strategies across a range of places in our community. One key strategy is to begin early in the home.

Families are primary agents of gender socialisation, and often provide children’s first sources of information and learning about gender.

[Full Story](#)

SAASSO’s 95th Anniversary



Calls For Violence Inquiry

One of Australia’s leading child psychologists is calling on the State Government to conduct an inquiry into violence in South Australian schools following two stabbings involving students.

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg says stabbing incidents, coupled with a growing trend of violence in the state’s schools, warranted immediate action by the government.

“I’m calling on the South Australian Government to conduct an inquiry into violence in schools,” he told The Advertiser.

“Quite clearly schools have a legal obligation to provide a safe environment in which to learn.”

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