



This week's stories from the media

- State Government funds French class at Highgate Primary
- SAASSO Survey
- Unethical to admit low score teacher trainees
- Researchers urge phonics for all preschoolers
- Women only academic roles
- Schools of 2050

SAASSO Survey

There are renewed calls to ban homework in primary schools.

Meanwhile, France has banned mobile phones in schools - prompting calls for a similar ban in Australia.

Should high school students be required to help those less fortunate than themselves?

The debate over teacher quality continues, with renewed calls for higher scores for those wishing to be teachers.

What do you think?



[Take the survey](#)

State Government Announces Funding For French Class At Highgate Primary

A popular French bilingual school program has been thrown a lifeline by the State Government after a campaign from parents.

Education Minister John Gardner confirmed a second Reception class would next year be funded as part of Highgate Primary's French program.

In response to demand, the school had this year offered an extra French class, but had to fund it itself.

That second class was at risk for next year because the school could no longer afford the cost.

Mr Gardner said the new funding would make it easier for local families and Adelaide's French community to get their children into the bilingual program.

"Highgate's French program has proven to be popular and we are pleased that we are able to offer this opportunity to more families," Mr Gardner said.

"This ensures local families have priority access to their local school with the added benefit of their child being able to learn a language."

Highgate Primary parent Jacqui McCann, who started a petition to save the second class earlier this year, said the extra funding was "brilliant news".



"The fact (Mr Gardner) has come out publicly saying siblings are guaranteed a spot ... it's not only the expansion of the program, but it's the equity in families, which is really important to all the parents for their children's futures," Mrs McCann said.

As part of the program, students undertake about 80% of their lessons in French.

[More](#)

“...Women hold just 16% of academic roles in the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences...”

Unethical To Admit Low Score Teacher Trainees

A former schools adviser to the government and past vice-chancellor at three universities has expressed alarm at low entry standards into teaching courses, following revelations that students with tertiary admission ranks significantly below average were attracting university offers.

Professor Steven Schwartz, who recently retired as chairman of the ACARA, said tertiary institutions had an ethical duty to ensure students they enrolled were fit to study.

His comments come as the Australian Council of Deans of Education has privately conceded students with low scores have been accepted into teaching courses.

In South Australia, Flinders University had made offers to three students with ATARs below 40.

[More](#)



Researchers Urge Phonics For All Preschoolers

Education researchers are calling for explicit phonics instruction to be rolled out during preschool, following a study that revealed four-year-olds showed improved reading readiness after just 13½ hours of lessons.

The research, conducted by Flinders University, found children who took part in phoneme-focused phonological awareness classes performed 2½ times better at converting sounds into letters - a key early-reading skill - than those who continued with the typical preschool program.

Participating children with spoken-language difficulties also benefited, showing improved phoneme awareness and letter-sound knowledge when tested afterwards.

The findings also challenged the prevailing theory that phoneme-level skills were considered developmentally challenging for most four-year-olds.

[More](#)

Women Only Academic Roles

Adelaide University is advertising academic positions open only to female applicants for the first time, in a bid to boost gender equity in the sciences.

The eight jobs are in engineering fields - aerospace, software, structural and architectural - as well as cyber security, statistics and probability. They range from associate professor level down to lecturers.

Women hold just 16% of academic roles in the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences, compared to 40% across the university as a whole.

The figure was even lower for senior roles.

[Full Story](#)

School Post

Term 4 School Post in school!



Schools Of 2050

Students communicate with devices embedded in clothing or accessories, parents monitor their children via live video and teachers work with robots to provide personalised learning programs.

Welcome to school, circa 2050. It's a world where students go on virtual field trips without leaving the classroom - if "classroom" is even the right word.

Students and classes are unlikely to be grouped in ages or year levels, 3D printing will play a critical factor, robots will be commonplace but artificial intelligence will not take over.

It's a system far removed from the present day, but one towards which educators have already started working.

[Read more](#)