

Education Act reform

Information sheet for teachers, early childhood workers and support staff

A new Bill has been drafted to reform and update the Acts of Parliament that form the basis of our public education and care system here in South Australia. Education and early childhood services will now come under a single Act.

The State Government has been progressively reforming our education system to ensure children get the best start in life. In recent times, an independent regulator for schools and early childhood services such as preschool and long day care facilities was introduced and, as part of a \$548 million investment in education in the 2016-17 State Budget, the SACE is set to be modernised to ensure the general capabilities, innovation and entrepreneurship are strongly promoted to students.

The draft Education and Children's Services Bill 2016 aims to bring about a number of changes to provide students with the support services they need, further increase autonomy in schools and share information more effectively with parents and other schools.

The Bill at a glance

- Acknowledging the importance of teaching and support staff in education
- Making it easier for schools to keep good staff so that they can focus on great teaching and learning
- Recognising that education provided in public schools is secular in nature
- Bringing together and modernising arrangements for both teachers and early childhood workers under a single Act
- Introducing new powers and increasing penalties to ensure that schools are safe environments for all staff in government and non-government schools
- Tougher penalties for people who behave in an offensive manner on school premises and use abusive, threatening or insulting language – up to \$2500
- New penalty for people who trespass on school sites and the ability to bar individuals – up to \$2500
- Making it easier for schools to work with allied health professionals and other support staff to ensure students get the local services they need
- Updating the way schools share information about student progress and development with parents and each other.



Reasons for change

- We know that after parent support, the single most effective way to lift the quality of our children’s education is to improve the quality and status of teachers and leaders.
- The new legislation acknowledges the important work that teachers do – strong professional standards will improve the public perception of and respect for teachers and educators.
- Everyone has a right to feel safe at school, free from abuse and threatening behavior. We are increasing the maximum penalty for people who behave in an offensive manner from \$500 to \$2500, prohibiting a broader range of misbehavior and increasing penalties for trespassing on a school site.

What this means for you as a teacher, educator or staff member

- When students move between schools, whether government or non-government, the process should be smooth and seamless so that each child’s learning is not hindered and new schools are informed about developmental progress. You will have access to more information, more often.
- It will be easier for support services to work locally to meet the needs of your school community in a more flexible way.
- Education and early childhood services will now come under a single Act.
- You will have greater provisions to manage poor adult behaviour on school sites.

