

Peter Treloar MP

Member for Flinders

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Regional children deserve strong foundation in literacy

A key education policy aimed at giving every South Australian child a strong foundation in literacy – the *Literacy Guarantee* – was launched by the State Liberals recently.

With a focus on regional South Australia, students with dyslexia and other learning difficulties will be a key area of the comprehensive plan to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students.

“All too often regional and rural areas, such as those on the Eyre Peninsula, are not given adequate support to assist students with dyslexia and other learning difficulties,” Member for Flinders Peter Treloar said.

“Students with dyslexia across South Australia should be adequately supported, no matter where they live, and as the local member I want to see these students and their parents receive all the support and resources that they need.

“SPELD SA – a leading South Australian NGO that runs workshops helping parents of children with dyslexia and other learning difficulties – currently gets very limited support to hold these workshops in regional SA. I’m really pleased that under this policy, a Liberal government will deliver at least one of these parent dyslexia workshops here in Flinders every year – starting with a workshop in Port Lincoln in the first year after the election.”

The \$9 million *Literacy Guarantee* will include:

- Literary coaches with expertise in evidence based practice, such as phonics, and teaching students with dyslexia and other learning difficulties
- Phonics checks for all Year One students
- Free dyslexia workshops for parents across the State
- *Literacy Guarantee* conferences - professional development opportunities for teachers
- Parental engagement resources for schools and families
- Working with ACARA to develop meaningful proficiency standards for NAPLAN testing
- Requiring all new teaching graduates to pass literacy and numeracy tests (which are now required of new teaching students) to gain employment in South Australian government schools
- Working with NGOs delivering evidence based literacy and numeracy programs targeted at disadvantaged children in their early years before they get to school
- Reviewing how SACE exams are conducted for students with learning difficulties
- Support for school breakfast programs being extended across South Australia.

State Liberal Leader Steven Marshall said we want our students to access the best education system in Australia.

“With a strong foundation in literacy, everything else follows,” State Liberal Leader Steven Marshall said.

“The Weatherill Labor Government has presided over an underperforming South Australian education system, with NAPLAN results ranking lowest or second lowest in 18 out of the 20 categories measured – it’s not good enough.

“Even the most conservative estimates show that more than one in 10 students struggle with dyslexia and other learning difficulties. These students, who have persistent difficulty with reading and spelling, will benefit greatly from our *Literacy Guarantee*.

“Literacy and numeracy skills are the foundation for success in learning and in life – we must be able to guarantee those skills for our children.”