

**17 January 2017**

## The soaring cost of education – REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Regional New South Wales is one of the most expensive regions in Australia to educate a child according to exclusive research released today.

The ASG Planning for Education Index discovered for a child born in 2017 the forecast cost of a government education in regional New South Wales (\$53,806<sup>1</sup>) is \$1858 more than the national regional average (\$51,948).

The research found regional Western Australia (\$44,783) is the most affordable region to educate a child in the government system, 14 per cent below the national regional average, with regional Victoria (\$54,510) Australia's most expensive regional area.

The survey also revealed the estimated cost of a private education in regional New South Wales (\$364,230) is \$22,419 above the national regional average (\$341,811) and second only to regional Victoria (\$370,570) as the country's most expensive.

However, the forecast cost of a systemic<sup>2</sup> education in regional New South Wales (\$173,354) is \$5339 less than the national regional average (\$178,693), with regional Queensland (\$199,328) and regional South Australia (\$197,508) forecast to be the most expensive regions to educate a child at a systemic school.

The ASG Planning for Education Index also forecasts preschool or kindergarten in Australia could cost parents between \$2818 and \$8506 depending on the school type.

The survey also discovered that the estimated cost of a private education across regional Australia has soared by 61 per cent in the past decade. For a child born in 2017 the forecast cost of a private education across regional Australia is \$341,811, a jump of \$130,148 compared to a child born in 2007 (\$211,663).

The estimated cost of a regional systemic education has also skyrocketed by 52 per cent over the same period to \$178,693, while the estimated cost of a government education has climbed 19 per cent over the decade to \$51,948.

Based on more than 12,500 responses, the index calculates a range of variables including school fees, transport, uniforms, computers, school excursions and sporting trips to determine the cost of education.

School fees, the cost of extracurricular activities including excursions and uniforms have all risen in the past year, however computers and transport costs have fallen when compared to 2016.

ASG member and mother of two Amber Little says living along the south coast of New South Wales has significantly pushed up their education costs.

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<sup>1</sup> These figures are the average estimated costs and represent the highest amount parents and families could expect to pay.

<sup>2</sup> A systemic education includes religious schools e.g. Catholic, Anglican, Uniting Church, Buddhist, Islamic or Hindu

"We moved to Merimbula from Melbourne about four years ago, and living in a regional area we've had to spend a lot of money on transport costs to support their education.

Aria (year 8) represented her school in the south coast region for tennis and in the first year we drove to Newcastle, paying for transport and accommodation for four days and I think we paid just over \$1000.

Aria and Trent (year 12) also attend a Catholic school so their school fees are a large cost factor, but it's important to give them the best education we can afford. We thank God for ASG because if we had tried to save for their education on our own it wouldn't have worked."

ASG CEO John Velegrinis says the cost of education has risen at two and a half times the rate of inflation over the past decade.

"Our research predicts the cost of education will increase, irrespective of whether you send your child to a government, systemic or private school.

The estimated cost of a government education across regional Australia has jumped \$8443 in the past decade. That is why we encourage parents to start planning for education as early as possible, even from the moment their child is born."

Mr Velegrinis says Australians are fortunate to have excellent government, systemic and private schools to choose from, but costs can spiral out of control.

"If you have three children, the cost of educating them in New South Wales' regional private education system could reach almost \$1.1 million. That's more than the purchase price of the average family home.

We advocate parents use a disciplined approach by putting a little bit away each week so they can financially afford to meet their children's educational goals and aspirations."

Independent statistician and Managing Director of foreseexchange Charlie Nelson says a range of economic factors influence the cost of education.

"Employment growth, hourly wages and inflation all impact the cost of living, which puts extra strain on the family budget.

With school fees likely to rise further, it has never been more important for parents to financially plan for their child's future."

For more information about ASG call 131 ASG (131 274) or visit [www.asg.com.au](http://www.asg.com.au)

### Summary of total forecast education costs for a child born in 2017

	Location	Public	Systemic	Private
<b>National</b>	Metropolitan	\$68,613	\$239,672	\$487,093
	Regional	\$51,948	\$178,693	\$341,811
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	Metropolitan	\$52,012	\$233,194	\$447,307

<b>New South Wales</b>	Metropolitan	\$75,080	\$250,862	\$575,140
	Regional	\$53,806	\$173,354	\$364,230
<b>Queensland</b>	Metropolitan	\$60,135	\$243,964	\$372,037
	Regional	\$51,299	\$199,328	\$337,027
<b>South Australia</b>	Metropolitan	\$58,587	\$246,786	\$377,131
	Regional	\$50,079	\$197,508	\$295,924
<b>Tasmania</b>	Metropolitan	\$45,832	\$201,212	\$433,990
	Regional	\$48,064	\$165,042	\$350,211
<b>Victoria</b>	Metropolitan	\$77,371	\$224,548	\$536,515
	Regional	\$54,510	\$161,757	\$370,570
<b>Western Australia</b>	Metropolitan	\$56,788	\$235,800	\$407,627
	Regional	\$44,783	\$147,522	\$319,135

*A very small number of responses were received from the Northern Territory in the most recent survey. As such, the provision of cost estimates for the Northern Territory in isolation would be highly unreliable and therefore have not been included. It is recommended that those in the Northern Territory refer to the national figures or the figures for adjoining states as a basis for planning. These figures are the average estimated costs and represent the highest amount parents and families could expect to pay. ASG cannot guarantee that they will represent the actual costs of education for a particular child.*

## Further information

For comprehensive summary sheets detailing the cost of education in metropolitan and regional Australia visit: [www.asg.com.au/edcosts](http://www.asg.com.au/edcosts)

## Editor's notes

*ASG conducts the ASG Planning for Education Index annually, asking parents to estimate education costs, which cover preschool, primary and secondary schools in Australia. Cost estimates are based on 12,500 responses collected by ASG.*

*To help with the costs of education, ASG Funding Solutions is an annual education costs payment service that takes the financial pressure off parents, families and guardians and allows you to pay for your child's school fees, uniforms, books and other education items in manageable instalments over the year.*

*ASG is a member owned organisation, helping to create educational opportunities for children. ASG has been helping families and their children for more than 40 years. During this time, more than 530,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2.5 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members. For more information visit: [www.asg.com.au](http://www.asg.com.au)*

## Media contact

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