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The soaring cost of education – REGIONAL VICTORIA

Regional Victoria is the most expensive region in Australia to educate a child in the private and government school systems 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 Victoria (\$54,510¹) is \$2562 more than the national regional average (\$51,948), and considerably more expensive than regional Western Australia (\$44,783), the country's most affordable region to educate a child in the government system.

The survey revealed the estimated cost of a private education in regional Victoria is \$370,570, eight per cent or \$28,759 above the national regional average (\$341,811).

Regional South Australia (\$295,924) is the most affordable region in Australia to educate a child at a private school, a massive \$74,646 less than regional Victoria.

Despite being the most expensive region in Australia to educate a child at private and government schools, the index discovered regional Victoria is expected to be one of the most affordable regions to send a child to a systemic² school. Regional Victoria (\$161,757) is nine per cent below the national regional average (\$178,693) and second only to regional Western Australia (\$147,522) as the most affordable region for a systemic education.

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.

Geelong father of three Peter Skurrie says he joined ASG more than 17 years ago so he could help support his sons throughout their senior school years.

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

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

"My wife and I always knew education was going to get more expensive as Daniel (year 11), Joshua (year 7) and Kyle (post-secondary) moved through high school.

So far the biggest expense has been technology. Everybody needs tablets and laptops and the internet. There's a huge reliance on technology at schools and we've spent approximately \$6,000 already on top of a digital atlas we need to buy each year.

The start of the year is always a struggle because we've had to factor in three sets of school fees and camp costs. At one point we were paying \$300 a month towards our ASG contributions but we always treated it as a priority because education is so important.

Kyle wants to study psychology and hopes to do a bridging course this year, while Daniel is interested in electrical engineering. We want them to do whatever they love and get the qualifications they need to support their future."

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 Victoria's regional private education system could top \$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

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

	Location	Public	Systemic	Private
National	Metropolitan	\$68,613	\$239,672	\$487,093
	Regional	\$51,948	\$178,693	\$341,811

Australian Capital Territory	Metropolitan	\$52,012	\$233,194	\$447,307
New South Wales	Metropolitan	\$75,080	\$250,862	\$575,140
	Regional	\$53,806	\$173,354	\$364,230
Queensland	Metropolitan	\$60,135	\$243,964	\$372,037
	Regional	\$51,299	\$199,328	\$337,027
South Australia	Metropolitan	\$58,587	\$246,786	\$377,131
	Regional	\$50,079	\$197,508	\$295,924
Tasmania	Metropolitan	\$45,832	\$201,212	\$433,990
	Regional	\$48,064	\$165,042	\$350,211
Victoria	Metropolitan	\$77,371	\$224,548	\$536,515
	Regional	\$54,510	\$161,757	\$370,570
Western Australia	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

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

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