

STUDENTS TO HAVE A VOICE

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Students in South Australia could soon have a say in how their schools are run.

This comes after Education Minister Blair Boyer proposed mandating greater pupil participation in decision-making on campus.

His proposal includes “weaving” into the legislation that, as a requirement, all secondary schools must have student representation on their governing councils.

The role of a governing council in schools includes strategic planning, determining policies, and the application of financial resources. It usually includes school administrators and parents.

Under the proposal, governing councils on secondary campuses would transition to a model that includes two student members. Primary schools would also have the option for pupil representation.

“I think students should be at those meetings having a say, and that’s one of the things I’d like to do,” Mr Boyer said on Monday.

“I would like to see those ideas at local sites be considered and tell students that we aren’t just going to pay lip service to your ideas.

“We actually might take them seriously and do something about it, which means someone else might speak up.”

Mr Boyer said creating a requirement through legislation would ensure “schools are forced to listen to what students are saying”.

He said he had asked the Education Department to introduce pupil representatives on governing councils after speaking with students on the SA SRC, an initiative run by the Commissioner for Children and Young People Helen Connolly.

While student representation was a feature at some schools, Mr Boyer said: “We have been lacking in terms of having a student voice at that level. Some schools do it and do it well.

“A lot of important decisions about how a school is run are made at the school board or governing council meeting.”

He announced the proposal at an event at Parliament House in which [The Advertiser's Teen Parliament](#) students questioned him about the biggest issues facing them.

The announcement was prompted when Nuriootpa High School year 10 student Haylie Staunton asked Mr Boyer about opportunities for young people to have their voices heard. "I do take student voice really seriously, and in no small part because you come along to things like Teen Parliament and some of the ideas are fantastic ideas that we should adopt," he said.

In February, 30 students tackled the big issues in SA as they took the places of the state's politicians in Parliament House.

The students' discussions in Teen Parliament 2025 mirrored debate playing out in SA and national politics, covering topics such as speed limits, nuclear power and drug rehabilitation.