



Student Anxiety Summit

Friday 27 February 2026

AGENDA

8.30am: Arrival and sign in.

9.00am: Ms Jocelyn Brewer, psychologist and MC for the day.

9.10am: Professor Patrick McGorry AO. Professor of psychiatry at The University of Melbourne. The ever-rising tide of mental ill-health in children and teenagers in Australia. How we can forestall the emergence of serious psychiatric disorders leading into adolescence in the years to come by acting now.

9.45am: Ms Angela Falkenberg, National President of the Australian Primary Principals' Association. Beyond the politics of student wellbeing initiatives in Australian schools. Navigating tensions in advocating for children to have what they need to be, learn and live well.'

10.15am: Mr Tim Lloyd, Australia's Most Influential Educator (2025) and Principal at Plumpton High School. Fostering 'models of care' for student wellbeing within schools, which involves all the stakeholders in the school community: parents, well-being professionals, medical professionals and teachers working together, to foster resilient teenagers.

10.50am: MORNING TEA.

11.20am: Ms Michelle Neverson-Smith, Principal and Ms Meegan Thryd, Implementation Coach at Cudgong Valley Primary School. A case study from a regional primary school undertaking The Anxiety Project, after one year.

11.50am: Ms Kath Spillane, Acting Principal at Normanhurst Boys' High School. Current RIOT Boss Champion. A case study from an urban high school undertaking the Resilience In Our Teens (RIOT) project after two years.

12.20pm: POM POM Crew – Dance group.

12:30pm: LUNCH.

1.00pm: Panel Discussion on what Australia can do now to manage student anxiety to decrease the diagnoses of child and teen anxiety disorders by 25% by 2030: Professor McGorry and Ms Angela Falkenberg and selected educators.

1.30pm: Discussion by the Summit's participants around the day's three questions:

- 1. What has driven the sharp rise in student anxiety seen across Australian schools over the past two decades?*
- 2. What barriers are currently preventing children with problematic anxiety from receiving effective support?*
- 3. If you were 'Premier for a Day', what three actions would you take immediately to stem the tide of anxiety in children?*

The end goal for the day: collation and writing-up of 7 recommendations arising from this Student Anxiety Summit to be sent to the Australian states' and territories' education ministers – Mr Rob Walker, Principal at Evans River K-12 Community School and Ms Trish Peters, principal at Kincumber Primary School.

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