

Media Release
NSW Greens Dr John Kaye MLC
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GILLARD'S WEBSITE WILL DAMAGE ALL NSW SCHOOLS

NSW Education Minister Verity Firth should revisit her decision to hand over school test results after her federal colleague Julia Gillard said that they could be used by parents to attack teachers.

Commenting on a story on page 1 of today's Sydney Morning Herald ('Tell off deficient teachers: Gillard', <http://tinyurl.com/smh100126>), Dr Kaye said: "The years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy tests were not designed to rank students, let alone teachers or schools.

"The tests are crude measures of accomplishment in spelling, reading, grammar and maths.

"The results say nothing of the quality of teaching in these areas or achievements in the rest of education.

"The federal government's website will undermine confidence in schools that have low scores, even though many of them are doing an excellent job.

"It will force teachers to sacrifice time spent on other important curriculum areas to boost scores.

"Julia Gillard is apparently unaware of the realities of schools. She is telling parents to attack teachers for low school scores, even though the test is conducted in the first half of the year before many teachers have had their full impact on a class.

"She apparently does not know that in many schools there are several teachers in one grade year and that the test is a statistically unsound measure of educational progress.

"State and territory ministers allowed their federal colleague to indulge her obsession with name-and-shame websites and reducing schools to a set of numbers.

"Handing over the state's school test results to the federal government has pushed education to the brink of a crisis.

"NSW Education Minister Verity Firth should take a look carefully at what she and her colleagues are about to do to schools, students and communities," Dr Kaye said.

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