

Media Release  
NSW Greens Dr John Kaye MLC  
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## **SCHOOL RESULTS WEBSITE SHOWN TO BE BADLY MISLEADING**

Leading educational statistician Associate Professor Margaret Wu from Melbourne University has thrown a spanner in the works of the so-called schools transparency agenda, according to Greens NSW MP John Kaye.

Commenting on a story in today's Australian ('National literacy and numeracy tests 'not reliable' see <http://tinyurl.com/NAPLAN-stats>), Dr Kaye said: "NSW Education Minister Verity Firth and her Federal colleague Julia Gillard are publishing each school's years 3, 5, 7 and 9 numeracy, literacy and spelling NAPLAN test results.

"They claim this will provide accountability to parents and the community about the achievements of each school.

"Professor Wu's work shows that Ministers Firth and Gillard are badly misleading parents.

"Comparisons of similar schools based on their NAPLAN results are statistically unreliable and dangerous.

"Professor Wu has demonstrated that inevitable random variations that enter into 40 question tests such as NAPLAN and attempts to make results from different years comparable mean that errors in the outcomes can mask substantial underlying improvements in students and in schools.

"One of Australia's leading educational statisticians is warning the nation's education ministers that the NAPLAN test is not suitable to the use they want to put it to.

"The lack of precision in the tests creates large margins of error that could unfairly stigmatise a school.

"The education revolution has just opened up a casino where the chips are the reputations of the nation's schools.

"If Julia Gillard and Verity Firth want accountability in schools, then they could start by being honest about their own inability to manage the statistical complexities of national testing.

"The so-called transparency agenda has always been about ideology without any basis in educational research," Dr Kaye said.

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