

From: Director-General

Dear Colleagues,

This morning education ministers released the 2009 NAPLAN results for Australia, and for each state and territory. They're available at [www.naplan.edu.au](http://www.naplan.edu.au)  
<<http://www.naplan.edu.au>>

By now your school's results should be available to your principal, through the SMART software and ready for analysis.

Individual student reports will be distributed to parents from 14 September.

In this second year of national testing NSW students have been able to maintain and in some areas even improve on their excellent results in 2008.

That's a credit of course to the students themselves and their families, but especially to the brilliant teaching and other work that goes on every day in our public schools.

Thank you.

For me, the most important result is the rate of participation in the assessments - 96.7% on average in NSW, well above the national average.

Why does that matter? It means 3, 500 more students in NSW will get the benefit of vital diagnostic information than if we tracked the Australian average.

NAPLAN is first and foremost an assessment to yield crucial information about what students know and can do, and how best to take their learning further.

With this information, teachers can tailor their instruction to build on what a student already understands, parents can better support their school's efforts and schools can more effectively direct professional development and support for their staff.

As a system it means we can better direct support and investment to meet the learning needs of the students we serve.

It also allows us to properly celebrate the success of schools in moving students' learning forward.

That's why next year's 2010 NAPLAN is even more important. It not only provides the annual diagnostic snapshot, but will reveal the learning growth over two years of the first cohort of students who sat the tests in 2008.

So how did we do?

This year, NSW has achieved the best results in the country in Spelling for all Year levels tested: Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

This marvellous effort sits alongside other great results, including improvement in Reading scores for all Year levels; improvement in Grammar and Punctuation for all Years; and improvement in Numeracy for Years 5 and 9.

In just about every domain of the assessment our results are tightly bunched with the ACT and Victoria.

That's an extraordinary achievement.

We have a far higher proportion of students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds than Victoria or the ACT, and many more of them participate in the assessments.

When you consider our context, these results underline just how good our teachers and other school staff are. And just how effectively every level of the public education system - schools, regions and central office groups - work together to support our students' learning and wellbeing.

As I write, education ministers are still refining the detail of the national website that will report schools' NAPLAN results, not as a league table, but in small groups of schools that are most alike in the students and communities they serve.

The website will not rank schools, and nor should it.

But providing information about schools that are helping the students of one community learn faster and better than the student of a very similar community is useful.

It helps us to inquire into what teaching practices, aspects of leadership, school structures, professional development, paraprofessional support and other factors are most likely to support success for students.

As soon as we have more detail about national school reporting I will share it with you.

I hope the rest of the term is good for you.

With my best regards,

Michael Coutts-Trotter  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING MANAGING DIRECTOR OF TAFE NSW  
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