



CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARENTS AUSTRALIA

SUBMISSION
to
NAPLAN REVIEW – have your say

REVIEW PANEL

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20 March 2020

NAPLAN REVIEW – have your say

Response from Catholic School Parents Australia

Please note:

Text in blue is the response from Catholic School Parents Australia.

Text in black is taken from the submission template.

There were character limits on each response.

The report often referred to is linked at Question 4.

NAPLAN is an example of a 'standardised test'. This means all students sit the same test under the same conditions and this is scored using the same marking criteria (noting that adjustments are provided to students with disability). Standardised tests allow for each student's performance and progress to be compared to other students completing the test.

Tell us what you believe should be the three most important elements of standardised testing in Australia by completing the following statements:

Response 1: Standardised testing should...

Provide valid and reliable student performance data which has consistency and reliability over time in measuring performance through validly similar tests of content and difficulty.

Response 2: Standardised testing should...

Provide useful benchmarks on student performance data over time for whole year levels, cohorts within levels and individual students within levels. The data are to be used for diagnostic analyses.

Response 3: Standardised testing should...

Provide individual student data which are portable across different schools and education jurisdictions.
Provide anonymised data for analysis and evaluation of national trends.
Be independent of context.

[Continued over]

4. The interim report highlights that the move to NAPLAN Online would allow a faster return of results for the components scored by computer, if delivery were not delayed until the results of the writing test were available. [See the interim report, results too delayed to be useful.](#)

What is your response to staging NAPLAN reporting to allow for a faster return of results for components other than writing (which would come at a later time)?

The move to NAPLAN Online would more adequately fulfil the original diagnostic purpose of NAPLAN.

The greater the lag time between the administration of the NAPLAN tests and receipt of results the less the diagnostic usefulness of the results.

The NAPLAN reporting should be focused on providing information that will maximise the understanding of the diagnostic implications to facilitate differentiation for learning for: individual students, class groupings, and whole year levels in the NAPLAN relevant year levels in a school.

5. Currently, NAPLAN tests are sat in May each year. The interim report suggested that one possible change would be to shift the test to earlier in the year. See the interim report, change the timing.

In your view, would this be a positive change? Why/why not?

Positives of moving the NAPLAN testing to Feb could include:

- * would be more clarity around NAPLAN as formative tests and hence less stress for teachers, students and parents;
- * more use as a diagnostic tool near the start of a year - online in Feb would mean access to results during Term 1 which would provide teachers with student performance data to inform planning to differentiate teaching for individuals and groups;
- * decreases time available in the year to teach for the tests;
- * could provide useful data for Term 1 parent-teacher interviews or parent-teacher-student learning conversations and enrich parents engaging in their child's learning, e.g. more aware of learning goals;
- * less time for stress to build;
- * might decrease use of NAPLAN as an enrolment filter; and
- * could provide a new culture on how stakeholders see NAPLAN results.

[Continued over]

6. The Review Panel is considering a number of improvements that can be made to NAPLAN tests and has highlighted some of these in the interim report. See the interim report, change the content.

One area they are particularly looking at is the writing component. What improvements would you suggest be made to the writing component of NAPLAN and why?

The writing component is the most complex component. We suggest it could be improved by:

- * having a minimum and maximum time range for completion of the writing component to reduce time pressures that e.g. stifle creativity;
- * through better resourcing address equity - e.g. ensuring availability of devices and internet access at school and home as this can have significant impact on online writing component as well as other NAPLAN tests;
- * better catering for diverse student cultures and contexts through writing component stimuli provided and evaluation of response quality;
- * more input from speech/occupational therapists in the design of the writing component, e.g. in relation to having the dexterity to type at same time as formulating ideas during the writing component.
- * Improving the consistency and reliability of the writing component. More focus on ensuring students clearly understanding what they are being asked to do.

7. In consultations held to date, some stakeholders raised various concerns about how NAPLAN data is used and reported. See the interim report, lowering exposure of results.

From your perspective, what should NAPLAN data be used for, who should it be reported to and how should this happen? (e.g.: directly reported to parents/caregivers, schools and systems or publicly reported through My School). Please explain why.

With a focus on NAPLAN as formative tests, it becomes a question of which stakeholders could benefit most from the data for diagnostic purposes.

NAPLAN data should be reported to parents/carers, students, schools, systems of schools and sector jurisdictions.

Aggregated, anonymised data could be generated by government agencies such that appropriate levels of national, state and territory governments are able to interrogate the data for agreed purposes as set out in the national aims of education.

There could be minimal reporting of NAPLAN data, as expected by government, in a school's published annual report, however the degree to which more NAPLAN data are made public should be a decision for each school community to decide.

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8(a) Currently all Australian school students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are able to sit NAPLAN – which is known as a census approach. The interim report identifies an approach known as sampling. See the interim report, making NAPLAN sample not census assessment. With a sampling approach, a random selection of schools is invited to sit the tests in a given year and these results are then attributed as statistically representative of Australian students.

From your perspective, what benefits and disadvantages do you see with moving to a sample approach?

8a) We agree with a census approach.

We do not agree with a random sampling approach to NAPLAN as the potential diagnostic capability of NAPLAN data would decrease if there were incomplete data sets resulting from NAPLAN tests not being undertaken every year.

Consistency and reliability of NAPLAN data could also become a casualty of random sampling.

8(b) If a sampling approach was adopted, should schools who are not in the sample be able to opt-in to participate? Why/Why not?

A further reason not to agree with the random sampling approach is that a determination to opt-in or not to opt-in could become a highly charged decision for various school communities.

Parents could perhaps choose schools on whether the school was known to choose to opt-in or not opt-in in those years when they were not part of a NAPLAN tests random sample.

Also it could become a question of equity as it is suggested that a greater proportion of students would have less experience at undertaking NAPLAN tests, less experience at sitting standardised tests and incomplete NAPLAN data sets for diagnostic purposes.

9. If you could make only one improvement to standardised testing in Australia, what would it be?

(Comments mainly refer to NAPLAN).

NAPLAN tests earlier in the year could once again re-emphasize and facilitate the diagnostic purpose for which they were first designed and this re-emphasis on the formative potential of NAPLAN tests could create a culture shift from NAPLAN data identifying 'backward looking' what we didn't teach to 'forward looking' what we need to teach, thus promoting a 'growth mindset' around learning.

Tests such as PISA should be undertaken by schools on an opt-in basis only.

Schools' use of 'just-in-time' standardised testing is vital to measuring learning growth in students.