



27 May 2010

Committee Secretary
Senate Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
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Dear Committee Secretary

Inquiry into the administration and reporting of NAPLAN testing

I respond to the invitation to provide a submission to the Inquiry and offer the following comments on the Terms of Reference.

(a) The conflicting claims made by the Government, educational experts and peak bodies in relation to the publication of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing

- The NAPLAN tests should be more clearly explained as being **one** indicator of a student's and a school's educational attainment.
- It is but one indicator that, while useful, needs to be considered in the context of a total educational experience, including the fact that a teacher or teachers may move on, or have moved on.
- The NAPLAN test, for example, cannot and does not measure 'care and concern', ie the level of individual compassion in a school. While literacy and numeracy are fundamental to a good education, they are a measure of skills. Education is more than a collection of skills.
- The NAPLAN test results should not be made public in any general sense and certainly not via the web. Rather they should be available only to the parents, schools and Commonwealth/State and Catholic/Independent school authorities.
- There is little value in creating league tables and there is a diminished value in regard to the tests, if there is no **extra** committed assistance (resources) to help address revealed shortcomings.

- There needs to be greater focus on attendance data, especially as it affects indigenous and other disadvantaged students, as this will help show why 'academic' results are often lacking.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this important inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Bob Such MP JP
Member for Fisher