

How can a system that judges individual students' abilities and then applies them en masse to give a view to parents and the greater community be fair?

Testing is no doubt necessary for the reasons of accountability and to make sure students are achieving, but to put accounts of 'underperforming' schools up on line will only increase the school's underperforming situation regardless of best intentions.

Schools can underperform for a great number of reasons – and testing can help get to the bottom of this – but 'outing' schools will only result in parents and community members ostracising or bad mouthing the institution and making matters worse for them. Once you are in a hole it is very hard to climb back out.

The 'outed' schools will not be able to attract appropriately trained staff. They will not be able to maintain a mixed balance of students; necessary to any organisation in an effort to expose individuals to all walks of life and ways of thinking.

'Outed' schools will suffer from severe morale drops and increased behavioural management issues.

Funding will likely be redirected to these schools in an effort to address some of the concerns. However, due to low staff morale and an inability to appropriately fill leadership positions funding will, in some cases, be rorted or misdirected. Therefore, the situation is worsened rather than bettered.

Unfortunately, better cannot be said of 'high performing' schools. The focus on testing and teaching to the NAPLAN will increase. This in turn will minimise authentic learning and will counteract excursions and extracurricular activities. Essentially, 'high performing' schools will sacrifice curriculum in order to maintain their 'high performing' status.

Creativity and a focus on technology will decrease in schools – both are areas that students are predicted to need in the future.

I agree that parents need feedback on schools. But this should be given in a more detailed and comprehensive manner. It should not be based solely on test scores. Tests can be flawed and provide inconclusive results.

'Underperforming' schools often cater to a different type of student and therefore cannot be expected to achieve the results of a 'high performing' school. The 'underperforming' school may have a curriculum in place that allows students to achieve success in other ways; through exposure to the workplace, applied learning, having an extensive disabled services unit, even going so far as to expect more moderate outcomes for all students rather than high expectations for some and low for others.

I do not disagree with NAPLAN tests, only the way the data is used and the way in which the data is the only representation of the school. Perhaps professional school analysts need to be employed who are sent into schools to make professional judgment on particular areas it is excelling in and where it needs improvement. I see this as a much better way to make judgment on the internal workings of schools. After all, we're all in this game for the benefit of improving future generations.