

Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2012-2013

Agency - Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority

DEEWR Question No. EW0315_13

Senator Mason asked on 30 May 2012 , Hansard page 6

Question

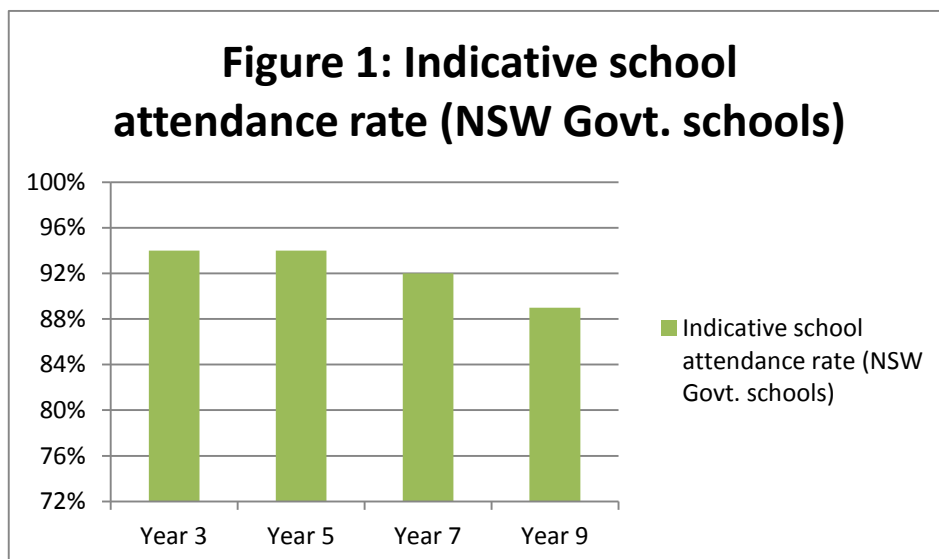
ACARA - NAPLAN

Senator MASON: I am sure you will recall that we spoke about participation rates last time, and your response to question on notice EW1183_12 provided a table where the percentage of students who sat the NAPLAN exams was broken down by year level and by domain—numeracy, reading and language conventions and writing and so forth. I notice that participation rates for years 3, 5 and 7 are quite similar—between 95.4 and 96.4 per cent across all those domains that I mentioned. But for year 9 it lags considerably behind—in fact, year 9 participation percentages were between 2.3 and 3 per cent lower than the lowest of the other three year levels in the domain. Why is that?
Mr Randall: Given my previous answer, my conjecture—I do not have the data in front of me right now and I am happy to take it on notice to explore this some more—is that that probably reflects my point about attendance at school.

Answer

ACARA has provided the following response.

ACARA is unable to provide a definitive response to the reasons why Year 9 NAPLAN participation is lower than that of other year levels. Nevertheless, an indication of school attendance trends is provided below based on attendance rates in 2011 for the NSW government sector only. This demonstrates that school attendance in general for Year 9 students is well below that of other year levels.



Because the definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform, data cannot currently be aggregated or averaged at the national level. Further, NAPLAN participation data is collected and reported at a jurisdiction level as a whole (with all school sectors are included) and for each domain tested. The following table is taken from ACARA's response to the previous question on notice EW1183_12.

Table 1: NAPLAN participation rates % (approx)	Domain			
	Numeracy	Reading	Language Conventions	Writing
Year 3	95.7	95.6	95.9	95.4
Year 5	96.2	96.2	96.4	95.9
Year 7	96.0	96.2	96.3	95.6
Year 9	92.9	93.3	93.5	92.4

While data do not exist to provide a direct comparison between national school attendance rates and NAPLAN participation rates to satisfy the question above, it should be noted that NAPLAN participation rates follow a similar trend to that illustrated in Figure 1 above.