

8 June 2010

To the Senate Committee

Re: NAPLAN tests and “league tables”

I am a retired maths and science teacher with more than 30 years full time experience in government secondary schools and the TAFE system.

In addition to my teaching majors in sciences and maths, I have two majors in education and a strong background in statistics.

The NAPLAN tests are not a realistic means of comparing schools as there are simply too many variables, one of the most influential being socio-economic differences.

It is even almost too difficult to use the results within a school for grading.

The most useful role of the NAPLAN test results are to compare an individual’s progress through their school years.

There are other problems for the junior students who are too young to interpret the test items and are unable to concentrate for the duration of the test.

Even year 7 students struggle.

Parents may well find the results confusing and difficult to interpret and use them for emotive comparisons.

Parents cannot send their student children to government schools of their choice. Students are required to attend the school in their geographical zone.

Please bear these in mind and do not make the results public.

Yours sincerely