

NAPLAN league tabling is about politics and newspaper circulations. It does not have much to do with student well-being.

NAPLAN is developing into something much grander than it was meant to be. It serves some use in measuring progress over time, in the key areas of Literacy and Numeracy, but Literacy plus numeracy data is not necessarily equal the sum of the whole school achievement.

It can be useful for identifying whole school areas for improvement and monitoring student trends. Nothing else!

NAPLAN can't measure that important learning and teaching in schools which might be working the hardest, with the most challenging students. The most difficult and challenging students and circumstances should not be publicly labelled as failures when compared on a 'very unlevel playing field'. (Let's have a Schools 'coach' students to do well on NAPLAN tests. dollar / student ratio shown).

The beat-up of NAPLAN also runs the risk of it becoming the focus of the school's curriculum, possibly at the expense of other teaching that schools need to do well.

Statistically NAPLAN is also flawed. Because of the comparison to an 'average, half of the schools will be failed in any given year. If every school devoted **all** their time and resources to NAPLAN improvement this number will not change. Regardless of how well everyone is performing, there will always be half of schools at the 'top' and the other half at the 'bottom'. Schools (students) are set up to fail.

NAPLAN has moved from providing snapshot judgements about specific learning tasks (Literacy and Numeracy) in schools, to judgements about the whole school. Non- English Speaking students, low socio-economic communities, students with impairments and special needs, students who are school averse, students with mental health issues, NAPLAN caters to a narrow set of middle class values which are not representative of the wide range of school situations.

NAPLAN addresses a limited range of learning styles – not necessarily those advocated in the curriculum schools are delivering. For example, students learn by group work, collaboration, problem solving, creative and hands on activities. These learning styles and modes of thinking are not catered for in NAPLAN tests. Schools 'coach' students to do well on NAPLAN tests.

Is it any wonder that schools drill their students and narrow what they do because of the pressure to produce a 'winning' picture perfect snapshot? (and cheat . . .)

It's become an exercise in marketing / propaganda rather than a diagnostic tool.

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