

Submission on behalf of Ms Gail Davies

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I have great reservations about the use of NAPLAN data to create league tables. Those interpreting the data in the media, and also some in the political arena, do not understand the complexities which are involved in such practices and the effects which incorrect and/or inappropriate use of the data have on the whole school community, including the 'school self-esteem' of students. To use simplistic comparisons of data across schools of widely diverse cultural populations is simply unacademic, and easily damages the great effort that staff put in to students and student learning at schools who are less socially advantaged than others. The tables do not show the great successes of many students. It does not show the wonderful special programs that operate at my school (in particular, Indigenous programs, drama and dance productions, sporting achievements) which greatly enhance student engagement and practice, and make a real difference to many of these students' lives. As a teacher of 34 years, I can say adamantly that if Australia has to spend so much of the learning time of its pupils PREPARING for a test, then there is something wrong with the test and its interpretation. Can we not all see that student outcomes will be improved with improved pedagogical practices (Yes, let's spend more time teaching english and math's in primary, and teach it better! Let's make secondary curricular more relevant to teenagers' existence) and attention to social issues that are impacting student's early growth (such as lack of speech and conversational skills because of technological games etc.; attention to growing family issues) instead of TEACHING TO THE TEST. Let's give teachers a break and JUST LET THEM HELP STUDENTS LEARN! The increased pressure on teachers, students and parents concerning NAPLAN has grown to a ridiculous level and one which in the end will show to be detrimental to the cause. Please take time to just reflect on the big picture and think about what is truly important for our students in today's and tomorrow's world. NAPLAN is not the cure.