

**Senate Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Workplace
Relations – Inquiry into the *Australian Education Bill 2012***

Public Hearing, Friday 1 March 2013

DEEWR Questions on Notice

The following question was provided in writing from Senator McKenzie (4 March 2013).

Question 11: Please outline a response to the comments from the disability sector regarding the use of academic performance indicators as a measure of success.

Answer: The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (the Standards) require education and training service providers to support the rights of students with disability to access the curriculum and ensure that students with disability receive an education equal to that of any other student.

Students with significant intellectual disability and/or those with significant co-existing conditions which severely limit their capacity to participate in the tests may be exempted from one or more of the NAPLAN tests. However, remaining students in the disability cohort are encouraged to participate. Adjustments for students with disability permitted in NAPLAN testing are detailed in the National Protocols for Test Administration.

Ministers have agreed in principle to NAPLAN tests moving online by 2016. Beginning in 2013, ACARA will carry out more detailed work on how this goal can be achieved including investigating how students with disability engage with computer-based assessments.

On 7 December 2012, the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) provisionally endorsed the model of a nationally consistent collection of data on school students with disability used in the 2012 Trial. This provisional endorsement is subject to Education Ministers' consideration of a final report on the 2012 Trial.

Education Ministers have agreed that the implementation of a nationally consistent collection of data on school students with disability will take place using a phased approach over three years. The data collection will begin in selected schools across the nation from 2013 and progress towards implementation in all Australian schools, including professional learning and support materials for schools and data quality assurance processes, by 2015.

The 2011 report on the Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (the Standards) found that the development of individual education plans (IEPs) to meet individual students' needs is a critical factor in enabling the participation of students with disability in schools.

The review of the Standards raised issues regarding the quality and consistency of current IEP provision in Australia, and recommended that the Standards be revised to include a requirement for IEPs to be developed for students in schools.

DEEWR is currently progressing this work in consultation with the SCSEEC Joint Working Group to Provide Advice on Reform for Students with Disability.