



Weekly Briefing For Member Schools

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[2009 NAPLAN Results Released](#)

The 2009 NAPLAN report has shown that over 90 per cent of Australian students met the minimum benchmarks for literacy and numeracy in 2009, with Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory being the best performing states.

[Calls to Include Funding Details in the Publication of School Performance Information](#)

The Australian Greens and government school teacher and principal organisations have called for the Australian Government to include information on schools' levels of funding in any publicly available school performance information.

[Australian Government Releases Teacher Professional Learning Report](#)

Minister Julia Gillard has released a report outlining teacher professional learning in schools across Australia.

[Victorian Schools Protest Against New Literacy Tests](#)

Victorian government school principals have claimed that they lack the time and resources to implement a new literacy test.

[Principals Call for Additional Support for Disruptive Students](#)

Victorian government school principals have called for specialist centres to be established to deal with violent and disruptive students.

[Coalition Promises to Act on Student Discipline](#)

The Victorian Opposition has argued that it will overturn regulations limiting the powers of government school principals to deal with student discipline.

[Parliamentary News](#)

Forthcoming sitting dates for the Australian and Victorian Parliaments.

[Seminars for the week beginning 21 September 2009](#)

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2009 NAPLAN Results Released

Interview, The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, 11/09/09; Media Release, The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, 11/09/09; Media Release, The Hon. Bronwyn Pike, MLA, 11/09/09; The Age, Farrah Tomazin & Dan Harrison, 12/09/09; The Australian, Justine Ferrari, 12/09/09; Herald Sun, Gerard McManus, 12/09/09; Sydney Morning Herald, Anna Patty & Dan Harrison, 12/09/09; Courier Mail, Tanya Chilcott, Patrick Lion, David Earley, Ursula Heger & Melanie Christiansen, 15/09/09

The Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) has released its report on national literacy and numeracy benchmark data from the National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The *2009 NAPLAN Summary Report: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy* indicated that more than 90 per cent of Australian students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 had performed at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and numeracy. The report also indicated that Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory had the highest average performances, while almost one in three students from the Northern Territory failed to meet the minimum benchmarks. Compared to 2008, Australian students' average scores increased for all areas except for writing. The report also indicated that the proportion of students who were able to meet the national benchmarks decreased as students became older. The Australian Government Minister for Education, The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, welcomed the report's findings, but argued more work needed to be done to support those who were unable to meet minimum benchmarks. She also insisted that the Australian Government would not alter its plans to publish school performance information, stating that 'we are absolutely determined to make sure that a spotlight is on every school'. The national report does not provide details on the performance of students in different school sectors. However, the Queensland Government has already released school-level NAPLAN performance data and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is expected to release school-level NAPLAN data by the end of 2009. Go to www.naplan.edu.au to access a copy of the report.

Calls to Include Funding Details in the Publication of School Performance Information

Media Release, Senator Sarah Hanson-Young, 16/09/09; The Australian, Justine Ferrari, 16/09/09; Sydney Morning Herald, Dan Harrison, 16/09/09

The Australian Greens have called for the Australian Government to introduce legislation to ensure that the publication of school performance information would not lead to the creation of simplistic league tables. Australian Greens' Senator Sarah Hanson-Young argued that legislation should require ACARA to ensure that all school performance information enabled the public 'to access the context in which the schools perform, including the funding they receive'. Senator Hanson-Young also argued that the Australian Government should review the new testing and reporting requirements for schools after two years, in order to determine their 'impact on resourcing, the teaching workforce and educational outcomes'. At the same time, the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA), the Australian Secondary Principals Association and the Australian Education Union have argued that the Australian Government should delay the publication of school performance information until it is able also to provide information on the amount of funding received by each school. The Australian Government had previously indicated that information on school funding sources would not become available until 2010, while ACARA will release NAPLAN data late in 2009. The APPA claimed that 'there are huge differences in resource allocation between some schools and this is a critical factor in assessing performance'. Minister Gillard stated that 'every effort' was being made to ensure that the collection and reporting of school data was consistent across Australia. However, she emphasised that 'parents and the community have already been waiting too long for this [school performance] information and these differences should not delay the provision of comprehensive information...about how our schools are going and which schools need a hand'. Minister Gillard also argued that it was 'quite shocking' that some states and territories had never previously collected school funding information.

Australian Government Releases Teacher Professional Learning Report

Media Release, The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, 17/09/09

Minister Gillard has released a report that aims to provide a comprehensive picture of teacher learning practices across Australia. The *National Mapping of Teacher Professional Learning Project Report 2008* is based on survey and interview data and includes information about teacher professional learning activities in both government and non-government schools. It aims to identify guidelines for future professional learning for teachers, to inform the development of national professional teaching standards and a national professional learning framework, and to explore the professional learning needs of teachers in the lead up to the implementation of a national curriculum. The report concluded that:

- teacher professional learning should involve strategic planning at the systemic, school and individual teacher level
- it should be explicitly embedded within teachers' work
- it should be diverse and appropriate to the needs of the teacher or group
- registration bodies, systems and schools should work together to share knowledge about inducting inexperienced teachers into the profession
- governments, registration bodies and schools should investigate how to account for teacher professional learning
- schools and teachers should be encouraged to form a range of professional learning partnerships, including teacher networks and cross-sectoral partnerships
- teaching should be recognised as a strongly collegial and collaborative engagement in continuing inquiry into practice.

Go to www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/QualityTeaching/researchandpublications/Documents/MAPPING_Finalreport.pdf to access a copy of the report.

Victorian Schools Protest Against New Literacy Tests

The Age, Farrah Tomazin, 16/09/09

The Victorian Principals' Association (VPA) has criticised plans by the Victorian Government for children to undertake a new literacy test. Over October and November, students in years Prep to 2 in Victorian government schools will take part in the online test of their reading, writing, speaking and listening abilities. The VPA claimed that schools would need to allocate up to 60 minutes per child to undertake the test, taking time from classroom studies and requiring additional school resources for casual relief teachers. The VPA estimated that schools would need approximately \$1.2 million to conduct the assessment process. The Victorian Minister for Education, The Hon. Bronwyn Pike, MLA, argued that the assessment was required because 'parents expect that teachers have the most comprehensive information at hand to better provide individualised teaching for their children'. She also stated that the assessment would allow 'better targeted teaching and individualised help for students needing extra help'.

Principals Call for Additional Support for Disruptive Students

Herald-Sun, John Masanauskas, 14/09/09

The VPA has also called for the Victorian Government to create 'student development centres' to deal with students who are violent or whose behaviour disrupts classes. In a submission to the Victorian Government, the VPA has argued that schools lacked the resources and were struggling to cope with some students' extreme behaviour. It argued that these children should be withdrawn to student development centres with specially trained teachers and welfare workers, to ensure that they received the appropriate assistance without disrupting other students' learning. The VPA claimed that the centres would offer an alternative to suspension and would assist students to return to mainstream classes. It indicated that students would only be withdrawn with the agreement of parents, the school principal and officials from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Coalition Promises to Act on Student Discipline

Media Release, Mr Ted Baillieu, MLA, 14/09/09; The Age, Farrah Tomazin, 15/09/09

The Victorian Opposition has announced that, if elected at 2010 next state election, it would give government school principals greater power to act on issues of student discipline. The Leader of the Opposition, Mr Ted Baillieu, MLA, released data indicating that the number of student suspensions in Victorian government primary schools had increased from 1089 in 2000 to 2175 in 2008. He criticised recent changes to the ability of individual school principals to suspend and expel students, and claimed that the data demonstrated that school discipline had 'gone backwards' under the Bracks and Brumby Governments. Mr Baillieu stated that the Coalition would:

- reinstate school principals' right to expel or suspend students at their discretion
- permit principals to ban dangerous items from school grounds
- permit principals to search students and confiscate weapons
- increase penalties for assault and vandalism on school grounds
- provide professional development for teachers to help maintain discipline.

Minister Pike argued that the Coalition's announcement was 'a lazy plan with disastrous consequences'. She stated that 'Victorian parents would be horrified to learn that Mr Baillieu and his Opposition want to carry out weapons searches of Victorian schoolchildren as young as five'.

Parliamentary News

The Australian Parliament (House of Representatives and Senate) rose on Thursday 17 September 2009. The House of Representatives will next sit from Monday 19 October 2009 until Thursday 29 October 2009. The Senate will not sit in the week starting on Monday 19 October 2009, but will instead consider the Supplementary Budget Estimates. The Senate will then sit from Monday 26 October 2009 until Thursday 29 October 2009. The Victorian Parliament (Assembly and Council) sat on Tuesday 15 September 2009 and rose on Thursday 17 September 2009. Both Houses will next sit from Tuesday 13 October 2009 until Thursday 15 October 2009.

Seminars for the week beginning 21 September 2009

Day	Seminar Name	Time	Venue
Monday 21/09	Effective Work Practices for Personal Assistants	9.30 am – 1.00 pm	Training Centre

The Seminar Room is located at 20 Garden Street South Yarra. The Training Centre and Board Room are located at 30 Garden Street South Yarra.

Note: The AISV Weekly Briefing is also available on the AISV web site, including back issues. The AISV web site is at <http://www.ais.vic.edu.au>.

To obtain further information on any of the above matters, please contact AISV

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